
IRVING·KANE·POND
HIS BOOK

Irving K. Pond
for A.B.P.

THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

WITH

A LIFE OF THE POET, EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES, CRITICAL NOTES, AND A GLOSSARIAL INDEX.

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BY THE

REV. HENRY N. HUDSON,

PROFESSOR OF SHAKESPEARE IN BOSTON UNIVERSITY.

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CYMBELINE.

FIRST printed in the folio of 1623, where it stands the last in the volume. The only contemporary notice of it that has reached us is in the Diary of Dr. Simon Forman, who gives with considerable detail the leading incidents of the play as he saw it performed at the Globe theatre somewhere between April, 1610, and May, 1611; the particular time not being noted, nor any further ascertainable, it seems, from other dates. This Forman is the same odd genius whom we have met with in connection with *The Winter's Tale* and *Macbeth*.

There is, I believe, no reason for doubting that *Cymbeline* was fresh from the Poet's hand when Forman saw it. It has the same general characteristics of style and imagery as *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale;* while perhaps no play in the series abounds more in those overcrammed and elliptical passages which show too great a rush and press of thought for the author's space. The poetry and characterization, also, are marked by the same severe beauty and austere sweetness as in the other plays just named: therewithal the moral sentiment of the piece comes out, from time to time, in just those electric starts which indicate, to my mind, the Poet's last and highest stage of art.

The only part of *Cymbeline* that has any historical basis is that about the demanding and enforcing of the Roman tribute. This Shakespeare derived, as usual in matters of British history, from Holinshed, who places the scene in the reign of the Emperor Augustus, and a few years before the beginning of the Christian era. The domestic part of the King's action, with all that relates to the Queen and Cloten, except the name of the latter, is, so far as we know, a pure invention of the Poet's; as is also the entire part of Belarius and the King's two sons, except that the names Guiderius and Arviragus were found in Holinshed.

The main plot of the drama, except the strong part which Pisanio has in it, is of fabulous origin, the story however being used with the Poet's customary freedom of enrichment and adaptation.

What source Shakespeare drew directly from in this part of the work, is not altogether clear. During the Middle Ages, and under the Feudal system, heads of families were liable to be away from home, often for a long while together, in wars and military expeditions. Then too the hospitalities of those times were large and free, the entertainment of strangers and travellers being made much of in the code of ancient chivalry. Of course the fidelity both of husbands and wives was liable to be sorely tried during these long separations, the former by those whom they were meeting or visiting, the latter by those whom they were entertaining. It might well be, that absent husbands, full of confidence in those to whom and by whom the sacred pledge had been given, sometimes laid wagers on their fidelity, and encouraged or permitted trials of it to be made. Doubtless, also, there was many a polished libertine who took special pride in provoking some arrangement of the kind, or in making such trials without any arrangement. Thus questions turning on that point came to be matter of common and familiar interest, entering into the serious thoughts of people far more than is the case in our time. So that there was no extravagance in the incident on which the main plot of this drama turns.

The chief points in the story seem to have been a sort of common property among the writers of Mediæval Romance. The leading incidents — as the wager, the villain's defeat, his counterfeit of success, the husband's scheme of revenge by the death of the wife, her escape, his subsequent discovery of the fraud, the punishment of the liar, and the final reunion of the separated pair — are found in two French romances of the thirteenth century, and in a French miracle-play of still earlier date. There are two or three rather curious indications that the miracle-play was known to Shakespeare, though this could hardly be, unless he read French. A rude version, also, of the story was published in a book called *Westward for Smelts*, and was entitled "The Tale told by the Fishwife of the Stand on the Green"; placing the scene in England in the reign of Henry

the Sixth, and making the persons all English. This, however, cannot be traced further back than the year 1620, and there is no likelihood that the Poet had any knowledge of it. But the completest form of the story is in one of Boccaccio's Novels, the Ninth of the Second Day, where we have the trunk used for conveying the villain into the lady's bedchamber, his discovery of a private mark on her person, and her disguise in male attire. As these incidents are not found in any other version of the tale, they seem to establish a connection between the novel and the play. Boccaccio is not known to have been accessible to the Poet in English; but then it is quite probable, and indeed almost certain, that he was able to read Italian books in the original. The substance of the story is soon told.

Several Italian merchants, meeting in Paris, went to talking about their wives. All agreed in speaking rather disparagingly, except Bernabo, of Genoa, who said his wife was perfectly beautiful, in the flower of youth, and of unassailable honour. At this, Ambrogiulo became very loose-spoken, boasting that he would spoil her honour, if opportunity were given him. The wager was then proposed and accepted. Going to Genoa, the intriguer soon found that Ginevra had not been overpraised, and that his wager would be lost, unless he could prevail by some stratagem. So he managed to have his chest left in her keeping, and placed in her private chamber. When she was fast asleep, with a taper burning in the room, he crept from his hiding, made a survey of the furniture, the pictures, and at last discovered a mole and a tuft of golden hair on her left breast. Then, taking a ring, a purse, and other trifles, he crept back into the chest.

Returning to Paris, he called the company together and produced his proofs of success. Bernabo was convinced, and went to seeking revenge. Arriving near home, he sent for his wife, and gave secret orders to have her put to death on the road. The servant stopped in a lonely place, and told her of his master's orders; she protested her innocence, and begged his compassion; so he spared her life, and returned with some of her clothes, saying he had killed her. Ginevra then disguised herself in male attire, and got into the service of a gentleman who took her to Alexandria, where she gained the Sultan's favour, and was

made captain of his guard. Not long after, she was sent with a band of soldiers to Acre, and there, going into the shop of a Venetian merchant, she saw a purse and girdle which she recognized as her own. On her asking whose they were, and whether they were for sale, Ambrogiulo stepped forth and said they were his, and asked her to accept them as a gift; at the same time telling her they had been presented to him by a married lady of Genoa. Feigning pleasure at the tale, she persuaded him to go with her to Alexandria. Her next care was to have her husband brought thither. Then she prevailed on the Sultan to force from Ambrogiulo a public recital of his villainy; whereupon Bernabo owned that he had caused his wife to be murdered. She now assures the Sultan that, if he will punish the villain and pardon Bernabo, the lady shall appear; and on his agreeing to this she throws off her disguise, and declares herself to be Ginevra, and the mole on her breast soon confirms her word: Ambrogiulo is put to death, and all his wealth given to the lady: the Sultan makes her rich presents of jewels and money besides, and furnishes a ship in which she and Bernabo depart for Genoa.

It may be gathered from this brief outline that in respect of character Imogen really has nothing in common with Ginevra. And indeed the Poet took none of his character from the novel, for this can hardly be said to have any thing of the kind to give; its persons being used only for the sake of the story, which order is just reversed in the play. But the novel presented certain obvious points of popular interest: these the Poet borrowed as a framework of circumstances to support his own original conceptions, evidently caring little for the incidents, as we care little for them, but in reference to this end.

This wonderful play has one very serious and decided blemish, which probably ought to be noted here. Of course I refer to that piece of dull impertinence in the fifth Act, including the vision of Posthumus while asleep in the prison, the absurd "label" found on his bosom when he awakes, and the Soothsayer's still more absurd interpretation of the label at the close. For nothing can well be plainer than that the whole thing is strictly irrelevant: it does not throw the least particle of light on the character or motive of any person; has indeed no business

whatever with the action of the drama, except to hinder and embarrass it. This matter apart, the *dénouement* is perfect, and the preparation for it made with consummate judgment and skill. And it is a noteworthy fact that, if the apparition, the dialogue that follows with the Jailer, the tablet, and all that relates to it, be omitted, there will appear no rent, no loose stitch, nor any thing wanting to the completeness of the work.

It is difficult to believe that Shakespeare wrote the passages in question at any time; impossible, that he did so at or near the time when the rest of the play was written. For I think every discerning student will perceive at once that the style of this matter is totally different from that of all the other parts. How, then, came it there? Some consider it a relic of an older drama, perhaps one written by Shakespeare in his youth. But the more common opinion is, that it was foisted in by the players, the Poet himself having nothing to do with it. There is no doubt that such things were sometimes done. Still I am inclined to think that it was supplied by some other hand at the time, and that the Poet himself worked it in with his own noble matter, perhaps to gratify a friend; for he was a kind-hearted, obliging fellow, and probably did not see the difference between his own workmanship and other men's as we do. At all events, I am sure it must have got into the play from motives that could have had no place with him as an artist. And how well the matter was adapted to catch the vulgar wonder and applause of that day, may be judged well enough from the thrift that waits on divers absurdities of the stage in our time. Doubtless, in his day, as in ours, there were many who, for the sake of this blemishing stuff, would tolerate the glories of the play.—As all the lines that are judged to fall under this censure are here marked with asterisks, there is no need of more words on the subject.

CYMBELINE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CYMBELINE, King of Britain.
GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, } his Sons; disguised as Polydore and Cadwal.
CLOTEN, Son to the Queen.
POSTHUMUS LEONATUS.
BELARIUS, a banished Lord.
PHILARIO, Friend to Posthumus, IACHIMO, Friend to Philario, } Italians.
A French Gentleman, Friend to Philario.
CAIUS LUCIUS, General of the Roman Forces.
PISANIO, Servant to Posthumus.
Two British Captains.
A Roman Captain.
CORNELIUS, a Physician.
Two Gentlemen.
Two Jailers.

QUEEN, wife to Cymbeline.
IMOGEN, Daughter to Cymbeline.
HELEN, Woman to Imogen.

Lords, Ladies, Roman Senators, Tribunes, Apparitions, a Soothsayer, a Dutch Gentleman, a Spanish Gentleman, Musicians, Officers, Captains, Soldiers, Messengers, and other Attendants.

SCENE. — *Sometimes in Britain, sometimes in Italy.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. — *Britain. The Garden of* CYMBELINE'S *Palace.*

Enter two Gentlemen.

1 Gent. You do not meet a man but frowns: our bloods
Not more obey the heavens than our courtiers
Still seem as does the King.[1]

[1] The King has his face clouded because of his daughter's marriage, and the courtiers all pretend to feel just as he does about it. *Bloods* is put for

2 Gent. But what's the matter?

1 Gent. His daughter, and the heir of's kingdom, whom
He purposed to his wife's sole son, — a widow
That late he married, — hath referr'd herself
Unto a poor but worthy gentleman: she's wedded;
Her husband banish'd; she imprison'd: all
Is outward sorrow; though, I think, the King
Be touch'd at very heart.

2 Gent. None but the King?

1 Gent. He that hath lost her too; so is the Queen,
That most desired the match: but not a courtier,
Although they wear their faces to the bent
Of the King's looks, but hath a heart that is
Glad at the thing they scowl at.

2 Gent. And why so?

1 Gent. He that hath miss'd the Princess is a thing
Too bad for bad report; and he that hath her,
I mean, that married her, — alack, good man,
And therefore banish'd! — is a creature such
As, to seek through the regions of the Earth
For one his like, there would be something failing
In him that should compare. I do not think
So fair an outward, and such stuff within,
Endows a man but he.

2 Gent. You speak him far.

1 Gent. I do extend him, sir, within himself;[2]

tempers or *dispositions;* and men's tempers were supposed to be subject to "skyey influences," or to sympathize with the tempers of the sky. So in Greene's *Never too Late*, 1599: "If the King smiled, every one in Court was in his jollitie; if he frowned, their plumes fell like peacocks' feathers." Also in Chapman's *Tragedy of Byron:* "They keepe all to cast in admiration on the King; for from his face are all their faces moulded."

[2] *Extend* is probably used here in the legal sense of to *estimate* or *appraise.* So that the meaning is, "My description falls short of what he is in himself." See vol. v. page 53, note 3.

Crush him together, rather than unfold
His measure duly.
2 Gent. What's his name and birth?
1 Gent. I cannot delve him to the root: his father
Was call'd Sicilius, who did gain his honour
Against the Romans with Cassibelan;
But had his titles by Tenantius,[3] whom
He served with glory and admired [4] success;
So gain'd the sur-addition [5] Leonatus:
And had, besides this gentleman in question,
Two other sons, who, in the wars o' the time,
Died with their swords in hand; for which their father,
Then old and fond of's issue, took such sorrow,
That he quit being; and his gentle lady,
Big of this gentleman our theme, deceased
As he was born. The King he takes the babe
To his protection; calls him Posthúmus Leonatus;
Breeds him, and makes him of his bed-chamber;
Puts to him all the learnings that his time
Could make him the receiver of; which he took,
As we do air, fast as 'twas minister'd; and
In's spring became a harvest; lived in Court —
Which rare it is to do — most praised, most loved;[6]
A sample to the youngest; to the more mature

[3] Tenantius was the father of Cymbeline, and the son of Lud. On the death of Lud, his younger brother, Cassibelan, took the throne, to the exclusion of the lineal heir. Cassibelan repulsed the Romans on their first invasion, but was vanquished on their second, and agreed to pay an annual tribute to Rome. After his death, his nephew Tenantius was established on the throne. Some authorities tell us that he quietly paid the tribute stipulated by his usurping uncle; others, that he refused it, and warred with the Romans; which latter account is the one taken for true by the Poet.

[4] *Admired* for *admirable*, and in the sense of *wonderful.* Repeatedly so.

[5] *Sur-addition* is *surname* or *superadded title.*

[6] "This enconium," says Johnson, "is highly artful. To be at once in any great degree *loved* and *praised* is truly *rare.*"

A glass that feated them;[7] and to the graver
A child that guided dotards: to his mistress,
For whom he now is banish'd, — her own price
Proclaims how she esteem'd him and his virtue;
By her election may be truly read
What kind of man he is.

2 Gent. I honour him
Even out of your report. But, pray you, tell me,
Is she sole child to th' King?

1 Gent. His only child.
He had two sons, — if this be worth your hearing,
Mark it, — the eld'st of them at three years old,
I' the swathing-clothes the other, from their nursery
Were stol'n; and to this hour no guess in knowledge
Which way they went.

2 Gent. How long is this ago?

1 Gent. Some twenty years.

2 Gent. That a king's children should be so convey'd!
So slackly guarded! and the search so slow,
That could not trace them!

1 Gent. Howsoe'er 'tis strange,
Or that the negligence may well be laugh'd at,
Yet is it true, sir.

2 Gent. I do well believe you.

1 Gent. We must forbear: here comes the gentleman,
The Queen, and Princess. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the Queen, Posthumus, *and* Imogen.

Queen. No, be assured you shall not find me, daughter,
After the slander of most stepmothers,

[7] Their *pattern* or *model;* the glass whereby they trimmed up and accomplished themselves. In like manner, the Poet describes Hotspur as "the glass wherein the noble youth did dress themselves."

Evil-eyed unto you: you're my prisoner, but
Your jailer shall deliver you the keys
That lock up your restraint. — For you, Posthúmus,
So soon as I can win th' offended King,
I will be known your advocate: marry, yet
The fire of rage is in him; and 'twere good
You lean'd unto his sentence with what patience
Your wisdom may inform you.

Post. Please your Highness,
I will from hence to-day.

Queen. You know the peril.
I'll fetch a turn about the garden, pitying
The pangs of barr'd affections; though the King
Hath charged you should not speak together. [*Exit.*

Imo. O
Dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant
Can tickle where she wounds! My dearest husband,
I something fear my father's wrath; but nothing —
Always reserved my holy duty — what
His rage can do on me: you must be gone;
And I shall here abide the hourly shot
Of angry eyes; not comforted to live,
But that there is this jewel in the world,
That I may see again.

Post. My queen! my mistress!
O lady, weep no more, lest I give cause
To be suspected of more tenderness
Than doth become a man! I will remain
The loyal'st husband that did e'er plight troth:
My residence in Rome at one Philario's;
Who to my father was a friend, to me
Known but by letter: thither write, my queen,
And with mine eyes I'll drink the words you send,
Though ink be made of gall.

Re-enter the Queen.

Queen. Be brief, I pray you:
If the King come, I shall incur I know not
How much of his displeasure. — [*Aside.*] Yet I'll move him
To walk this way: I never do him wrong,
But he does buy my injuries; to be friends,
Pays dear for my offences.[8] [*Exit.*

Post. Should we be taking leave
As long a term as yet we have to live,
The lothness to depart would grow. Adieu!

Imo. Nay, stay a little:
Were you but riding forth to air yourself,
Such parting were too petty. Look here, love;
This diamond was my mother's: take it, heart;
But keep it till you woo another wife,
When Imogen is dead.

Post. How, how! another? —
You gentle gods, give me but this I have,
And cere up my embracements from a next
With bonds of death![9] — Remain, remain thou here [*Putting on the ring.*
While sense can keep it on![10] And, sweetest, fairest,
As I my poor self did exchange for you,
To your so infinite loss; so in our trifles
I still win of you: for my sake wear this;
It is a manacle of love; I'll place it

[8] Meaning that the King is so infatuated with her, that the more she offends him, the more he lavishes kindnesses upon her, in order to purchase her good-will.

[9] Shakespeare calls the *cere-cloths*, in which the dead are wrapped, the *bonds of death*. In *Hamlet*, i. 4, he uses *cerements* in much the same way.

[10] While I have sensation to retain it. There can be no doubt that *it* refers to the ring, and it is equally obvious that *thee* would have been more proper. But Shakespeare has many such inaccuracies of language.

Upon this fairest prisoner. [*Putting a bracelet upon her arm.*

Imo. O the gods!
When shall we see again?

Post. Alack, the King!

Enter CYMBELINE *and* Lords.

Cym. Thou basest thing, avoid! hence, from my sight!
If after this command thou fraught the Court
With thy unworthiness, thou diest: away!
Thou'rt poison to my blood.

Post. The gods protect you!
And bless the good remainders of the Court!
I'm gone. [*Exit.*

Imo. There cannot be a pinch in death
More sharp than this is.

Cym. O disloyal thing,
That shouldst repair [11] my youth, thou heap'st
A year's age on me! [12]

Imo. I beseech you, sir,
Harm not yourself with your vexation:
I'm senseless of your wrath; a touch more rare
Subdues all pangs, all fears.

Cym. Past grace? obedience?

Imo. Past hope, and in despair; that way, past grace.

Cym. That mightst have had the sole son of my Queen!

Imo. O bless'd, that I might not! I chose an eagle,
And did avoid a puttock.[13]

Cym. Thou took'st a beggar; wouldst have made my throne

[11] To *repair* is, properly, to *restore* to the first state, to *renew.*

[12] This expression has been thought much too tame for the occasion. Gervinus regards it, and, I think, justly, as an instance of the King's general weakness: his whole character is without vigour; and whenever he undertakes to say or do a strong thing, he collapses into tameness.

[13] A *puttock* is a mean degenerate hawk, not worth training.

A seat for baseness.

Imo. No; I rather added
A lustre to it.

Cym. O thou vile one!

Imo. Sir,
It is your fault that I have loved Posthúmus:
You bred him as my playfellow; and he is
A man worth any woman; overbuys me
Almost the sum he pays.

Cym. What! art thou mad?

Imo. Almost, sir: Heaven restore me! Would I were
A neat-herd's daughter, and my Leonatus
Our neighbour shepherd's son!

Cym. Thou foolish thing! —

Re-enter the Queen.

They were again together: you have done
Not after our command. Away with her!
And pen her up.

Queen. Beseech your patience. — Peace,
Dear lady daughter, peace! — Sweet sovereign, leave
Us to ourselves; and make yourself some comfort
Out of your best advice.[14]

Cym. Nay, let her languish
A drop of blood a day; and, being agèd,
Die of this folly![15] [*Exeunt* CYMBELINE *and* Lords.

Queen. Fie! you must give way.

Enter PISANIO.

[14] *Advice* is *consideration* or *reflection.* Often so.

[15] Another apt instance of the weakness that permits the old King to be such a hen-pecked husband. By "this folly" he means Imogen's love for Posthumus; and she would ask no greater happiness than to die at a good old age of that disease. Of course, the King means it for a curse; but he has not snap enough to make it such.

Here is your servant. — How now, sir! What news?
Pis. My lord your son drew on my master.
Queen. Ha!
No harm, I trust, is done?
Pis. There might have been,
But that my master rather play'd than fought,
And had no help of anger: they were parted
By gentlemen at hand.
Queen. I'm very glad on't.
Imo. Your son's my father's friend; he takes his part.
To draw upon an exile! — [*Aside.*] O brave sir!
I would they were in Afric both together;
Myself by with a needle, that I might prick
The goer-back. — Why came you from your master?
Pis. On his command: he would not suffer me
To bring him to the haven; left these notes
Of what commands I should be subject to,
When't pleased you to employ me.
Queen. This hath been
Your faithful servant: I dare lay mine honour
He will remain so.
Pis. I humbly thank your Highness.
Queen. Pray, walk awhile.
Imo. About some half-hour hence,
I pray you, speak with me: you shall at least
Go see my lord aboard: for this time leave me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. — *The Same. A Public Place.*

Enter CLOTEN *and two* Lords.

1 Lord. Sir, I would advise you to shift a shirt; the violence of action hath made you reek as a sacrifice. Where air comes out, air comes in: there's none abroad so wholesome as that you vent.

Clo. If my shirt were bloody, then to shift it. Have I hurt him?

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] No, faith; not so much as his patience.

1 Lord. Hurt him! his body's a passable carcass, if he be not hurt: it is a throughfare for steel, if it be not hurt.

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] His steel was in debt; it went o' the backside the town.[1]

Clo. The villain would not stand me.

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] No; but he fled forward still, toward your face.

1 Lord. Stand you! You have land enough of your own; but he added to your having, gave you some ground.

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] As many inches as you have oceans. Puppies!

Clo. I would they had not come between us.

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] So would I, till you had measured how long a fool you were upon the ground.

Clo. And that she should love this fellow, and refuse me!

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] If it be a sin to make a true election, she is damned.

1 Lord. Sir, as I told you always, her beauty and her brain go not together: she's a good sign, but I have seen small reflection of her wit.[2]

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] She shines not upon fools, lest the reflection should hurt her.

[1] That is, to the jail, the place where other bankrupt debtors go. Alluding to Cloten's awkwardness in the handling of his sword.

[2] The more common explanation of this is, that "anciently almost every sign had a motto, or some attempt at a witticism underneath." But the Poet elsewhere uses *reflection* for *radiance* or *light*. See vol. xvii. page 14, note 9. So I suspect *sign* is here used in the astronomical sense. As Heath explains, "She is undoubtedly a *constellation* of considerable lustre, but it is not displayed in her wit; for I have seen but little manifestation of that." This is in accordance with the next speech, where *reflection* is used in its ordinary sense. Shakespeare often uses *wit* for *judgment*, *understanding*, or *wisdom*.

Clo. Come, I'll to my chamber. Would there had been some hurt done!

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] I wish not so; unless it had been the fall of an ass, which is no great hurt.

Clo. You'll go with us?

2 Lord. I'll attend[3] your lordship.

Clo. Nay, come, let's go together.

2 Lord. Well, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. — *The Same. A Room in* CYMBELINE'S *Palace.*

Enter IMOGEN *and* PISANIO.

Imo. I would thou grew'st unto the shores o' the haven,
And question'dst every sail: if he should write,
And I not have it, 'twere a paper lost,
As offer'd mercy is.[1] What was the last
That he spake to thee?

Pis. It was, His queen, his queen!

Imo. Then waved his handkerchief?

Pis. And kiss'd it, madam.

Imo. Senseless linen! happier therein than I!
And that was all?

Pis. No, madam; for so long
As he could make me with this eye or ear
Distinguish him from others, he did keep
The deck, with glove, or hat, or handkerchief,
Still waving, as the fits and stirs of's mind
Could best express how slow his soul sail'd on,
How swift his ship.

[3] *Attend,* as often, in the sense of *wait for* or *meet,* and not in that of *go along with.* Hence Cloten says, "Nay, *let's go together.*"

[1] "It were a paper lost, which would be as welcome to me as a pardon to a condemned criminal." — HEATH.

Imo. Thou shouldst have made him
As little as a crow, or less, ere left
To after-eye him.

Pis. Madam, so I did.

Imo. I would have broke mine eye-strings, crack'd the balls,
To look upon him; till the diminution
Of space[2] had pointed him sharp as my needle;
Nay, follow'd him, till he had melted from
The smallness of a gnat to air; and then
Have turn'd mine eye, and wept. But, good Pisanio,
When shall we hear from him?

Pis. Be assured, madam,
With his next vantage.[3]

Imo. I did not take my leave of him, but had
Most pretty things to say. Ere I could tell him
How I would think on him, at certain hours,
Such thoughts and such; or I could make him swear
The shes of Italy should not betray
Mine interest and his honour; or have charged him,
At the sixth hour of morn, at noon, at midnight,
T' encounter me with orisons, for then
I am in Heaven for him; or ere I could
Give him that parting kiss which I had set
Betwixt two charming words,[4] comes in my father,
And, like the tyrannous breathing of the north,
Shakes all our buds from growing.

[2] "The diminution *of space*" is the diminution *caused by distance.* The Poet has other like instances of lingual usage.

[3] *Vantage* or *advantage* was often thus used for *opportunity.*

[4] *Charming words* are *enchanting words;* words which, as by the power of enchantment, should guard his heart against the assaults of temptation; or tie her kiss upon his lips with such "might of magic spells" that "the shes of Italy" should not be able to steal it off. So, a charmed shield was a shield that could not be pierced. See vol. xvii. page 119, note 4.

Enter a Lady.

Lady. The Queen, madam,
Desires your Highness' company.

Imo. Those things I bid you do, get them dispatch'd.
I will attend the Queen.

Pis. Madam, I shall. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Rome. An Apartment in* PHILARIO'S *House.*

Enter PHILARIO, IACHIMO, *a* Frenchman, *a* Dutchman, *and a* Spaniard.[1]

Iach. Believe it, sir, I have seen him in Britain: he was then of a crescent note;[2] expected to prove so worthy as since he hath been allowed the name of: but I could then have look'd on him without the help of admiration, though the catalogue of his endowments had been tabled by his side, and I to peruse him by items.

Phi. You speak of him when he was less furnish'd than now he is with that which makes him[3] both without and within.

French. I have seen him in France: we had very many there could behold the Sun with as firm eyes as he.

Iach. This matter of marrying his King's daughter—wherein he must be weighed rather by her value than his own—words him, I doubt not, a great deal from the matter.[4]

French. And then his banishment,—

Iach. Ay, and the approbation of those that weep this lamentable divorce under her colours are wonderfully to extend him;[5] be it but to fortify her judgment, which else

1 The Dutchman and the Spaniard are but mutes in the scene.

2 Of *growing reputation.* We should say, becoming a man of *mark.*

3 That is, *completes* or *accomplishes* him.

4 Makes the description of him very distant from the truth.

5 To stretch his reputation beyond his merits.—Those "under her col-

an easy battery might lay flat, for taking a beggar, without his quality. But how comes it he is to sojourn with you? how creeps acquaintance?

Phi. His father and I were soldiers together; to whom I have been often bound for no less than my life. Here comes the Briton: let him be so entertained amongst you as suits, with gentlemen of your knowing, to a stranger of his quality.

Enter POSTHUMUS.

— I beseech you all, be better known to this gentleman; whom I commend to you as a noble friend of mine: how worthy he is I will leave to appear hereafter, rather than story him in his own hearing.

French. Sir, we have known together in Orleans.

Post. Since when I have been debtor to you for courtesies, which I will[6] be ever to pay, and yet pay still.

French. Sir, you o'er-rate my poor kindness. I was glad I did atone[7] my countryman and you: it had been pity you should have been put together with so mortal[8] a purpose as then each bore, upon importance[9] of so slight and trivial a nature.

Post. By your pardon, sir, I was then a young traveller;

ours" are those on her side, the favourers of her marriage. — *Approbation* properly requires a verb in the singular, but the Poet has many such instances of grammatical discord. See vol. xiv. page 154, note 12. — *Quality*, second line below, is *pursuit, calling*, or *profession*. Iachimo means that Posthumus is a beggar *in fact*, though not in name, or though he does not practise begging for a livelihood; in short, that he is a beggar without *a beggar's vocation*. The Poet often uses *quality* in this sense. See vol. xiv. page 205, note 51.

6 The usage of our time requires *shall* here instead of *will*.

7 *Atone*, as usual, in the sense of to *reconcile* or *at-one*.

8 *Mortal*, here, is *deadly* or *fatal*. Often so. See vol. xvii. page 30, note 6.

9 *Importance* was sometimes used for *import*. Thus in *The Winter's Tale*, v. 2: "A notable passion of wonder appeared in them; but the wisest beholder could not say, if the *importance* were joy or sorrow." The word in the text has sometimes been wrongly explained *importunity*.

rather shunn'd to go even with what I heard than in my every action to be guided by others' experiences:[10] but, upon my mended judgment, — if I offend not to say it is mended, — my quarrel was not altogether slight.

French. Faith, yes, to be put to the arbitrement of swords; and by such two that would, by all likelihood, have confounded one the other,[11] or have fallen both.

Iach. Can we, with manners, ask what was the difference?

French. Safely, I think: 'twas a contention in public, which may, without contradiction, suffer the report. It was much like an argument that fell out last night, where each of us fell in praise of our country mistresses; this gentleman at that time vouching — and upon warrant of bloody affirmation — his to be more fair, virtuous, wise, chaste, constant-qualified, and less attemptable, than any the rarest of our ladies in France.

Iach. That lady is not now living; or this gentleman's opinion, by this, worn out.

Post. She holds her virtue still, and I my mind.

Iach. You must not so far prefer her 'fore ours of Italy.

Post. Being so far provoked as I was in France, I would abate her nothing; though I profess myself her adorer, not her friend.[12]

Iach. As fair and as good — a kind of hand-in-hand comparison[13] — had been something too fair and too good for

[10] Rather studied to avoid conducting himself by the opinions of others than to be guided by their experience.

[11] That is, *destroyed*. *Confound* is often so used by the Poet.

[12] *Friend* and *lover* were used synonymously. "Not *merely* her friend," is the speaker's thought. Posthumus means that he regards Imogen rather with the reverence of a worshipper than with the fondness of a lover.

[13] What is "a hand-in-hand comparison"? Is *hand-in-hand* used in the sense of *tame* or *ordinary*, such a comparison as might be made of almost any lady? Perhaps so; as we speak of people as going hand in hand, meaning that they go on a footing of equality.

any lady in Britany. If she went before others I have seen, as that diamond of yours outlustres many I have beheld, I could but believe she excelled many;[14] but I have not seen the most precious diamond that is, nor you the lady.

Post. I praised her as I rated her; so do I my stone.

Iach. What do you esteem it at?

Post. More than the world enjoys.

Iach. Either your unparagon'd mistress is dead, or she's outprized by a trifle.

Post. You are mistaken: the one may be sold or given, if there were wealth enough for the purchase or merit for the gift; the other is not a thing for sale, and only the gift of the gods.

Iach. Which the gods have given you?

Post. Which, by their graces, I will keep.

Iach. You may wear her in title yours; but, you know, strange[15] fowl light upon neighbouring ponds. Your ring may be stolen too: so, your brace of unprizable estimations, the one is but frail, and the other casual; a cunning thief, or a that-way-accomplish'd courtier, would hazard the winning both of first and last.

Post. Your Italy contains none so accomplish'd a courtier to convince[16] the honour of my mistress; if, in the holding or loss of that, you term her frail. I do nothing doubt you have store of thieves; notwithstanding, I fear not my ring.

Phi. Let us leave here, gentlemen.

Post. Sir, with all my heart. This worthy signior, I thank him, makes no stranger of me; we are familiar at first.

Iach. With five times so much conversation, I should get ground of your fair mistress; make her go back, even to the yielding, had I admittance, and opportunity to friend.[17]

[14] The meaning is, "I could believe *only* that she excelled *many*, not *all*."

[15] *Strange* in the sense of *alien* or *foreign*, — *not belonging there.*

[16] To *convince* in the sense of to *overcome* or *subdue*. Often so.

[17] *To* was very often used where we should use *for* or *as*.

Post. No, no.

Iach. I dare thereupon pawn the moiety of my estate to your ring; which, in my opinion, o'ervalues it something: but I make my wager rather against your confidence than her reputation; and, to bar your offence herein too, I durst attempt it against any lady in the world.

Post. You are a great deal abused[18] in too bold a persuasion; and I doubt not you sustain what you're worthy of by your attempt.

Iach. What's that?

Post. A repulse; though your attempt, as you call it, deserve more, — a punishment too.

Phi. Gentlemen, enough of this: it came in too suddenly; let it die as it was born, and, I pray you, be better acquainted.

Iach. Would I had put my estate and my neighbour's on the approbation[19] of what I have spoke!

Post. What lady would you choose to assail?

Iach. Yours; who in constancy you think stands so safe. I will lay you ten thousand ducats to your ring, that, commend me to the Court where your lady is, with no more advantage than the opportunity of a second conference, and I will bring from thence that honour of hers which you imagine so reserved.

Post. I will wage against your gold, gold to it: my ring I hold dear as my finger; 'tis part of it.

Iach. You are afraid, and therein the wiser.[20] If you

18 *Abused* is *deceived* or *imposed upon.* A frequent usage. See vol. xiv. page 280, note 9.

19 *Approbation* in the sense of *making good* or *proving true;* as *approve* was often used. See vol. vii. page 171, note 23.

20 You are the wiser in fearing to have your wife put to the proof. To screw Posthumus up to the sticking-point, the villain here imputes his backwardness to a distrust of his wife, and so brings his confidence in her over to the side of the wager and trial. So in what Iachimo says just after: "But I see you have some religion in you, that *you fear*"; that is, evidently, fear

buy ladies' flesh at a million a dram, you cannot preserve it from tainting; but I see you have some religion in you, that you fear.

Post. This is but a custom in your tongue; you bear a graver purpose, I hope.

Iach. I am the master of my speeches; and would undergo what's spoken,[21] I swear.

Post. Will you? I shall but lend my diamond till your return. Let there be covenants drawn between's: my mistress exceeds in goodness the hugeness of your unworthy thinking. I dare you to this match; here's my ring.

Phi. I will have it no lay.

Iach. By the gods, it is one.—If I bring you sufficient testimony that I have enjoy'd the dearest bodily part of your mistress, my ten thousand ducats are mine; so is your diamond too: if I come off, and leave her in such honour as you have trust in, she your jewel, this your jewel, and my gold are yours; provided I have your commendation for my more free entertainment.

Post. I embrace these conditions; let us have articles betwixt us. Only, thus far you shall answer: If you make your voyage upon her, and give me directly to understand you have prevail'd, I am no further your enemy; she is not worth our debate: if she remain unseduced,—you not making it appear otherwise,—for your ill opinion, and the assault you have made to her chastity, you shall answer me with your sword.

Iach. Your hand; a covenant: we will have these things set down by lawful counsel, and straight away for Britain,

to have your wife's honour attempted, lest it should give way. It scarce need be said, that to such a man as Iachimo *religion* and *superstition* are synonymous terms.

21 That is, "I will *undertake* what I have *said.*" Such is often the meaning of *undergo.* See vol. xiv. page 32, note 30.

lest the bargain should catch cold and starve. I will fetch my gold, and have our two wagers recorded.

Post. Agreed. [*Exeunt* POSTHUMUS *and* IACHIMO.

French. Will this hold, think you?

Phi. Signior Iachimo will not from it. Pray, let us follow 'em. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. — *Britain. A Room in* CYMBELINE'S *Palace.*

Enter the Queen, Ladies, *and* CORNELIUS.

Queen. Whiles yet the dew's on ground, gather those flowers;
Make haste: who has the note of them?

1 Lady. I, madam.

Queen. Dispatch. — [*Exeunt* Ladies.
Now, master doctor, have you brought those drugs?

Cor. Pleaseth your Highness, ay; here they are, madam:
[*Presenting a small box.*
But, I beseech your Grace, without offence, —
My conscience bids me ask, — wherefore you have
Commanded of me these most poisonous compounds,
Which are the movers of a languishing death;
But, though slow, deadly?

Queen. I do wonder, doctor,
Thou ask'st me such a question. Have I not been
Thy pupil long? Hast thou not learn'd me how
To make perfumes? distil? preserve? yea, so
That our great King himself doth woo me oft
For my confections? Having thus far proceeded, —
Unless thou think'st me devilish, — is't not meet
That I did amplify my judgment in
Other conclusions?[1] I will try the forces

1 *Conclusions* in the old sense of *experiments.* "I commend," says Wal-

Of these thy compounds on such creatures as
We count not worth the hanging, — but none human, —
To test the vigour of them, and apply
Allayments to their act;[2] and by them gather
Their several virtues and effects.

Cor. Your Highness
Shall from this practice but make hard your heart:
Besides, the seeing these effects will be
Both noisome and infectious.

Queen. O, content thee. —
[*Aside.*] Here comes a flattering rascal; upon him
Will I first work: he's factor for his master,
And enemy to my son. —

Enter PISANIO.

How now, Pisanio! —
Doctor, your service for this time is ended;
Take your own way.

Cor. [*Aside.*] I do suspect you, madam;
But you shall do no harm.

Queen. [*To* PISANIO.] Hark thee, a word.

Cor. [*Aside.*] I do not like her. She doth think she has
Strange lingering poisons: I do know her spirit,
And will not trust one of her malice with
A drug of such damn'd nature. Those she has
Will stupefy and dull the sense awhile;
Which first, perchance, she'll prove on cats and dogs,
Then afterward up higher: but there is
No danger in what show of death it makes,
More than the locking-up the spirits a time,
To be more fresh, reviving. She is fool'd

ton, " an angler that *trieth conclusions*, and improves his art." See vol. xvi. page 161, note 41.

[2] *Act* here means *action*, *operation*, or *effect*.

With a most false effect; and I the truer,
So to be false with her.[3]

Queen. No further service, doctor,
Until I send for thee.

Cor. I humbly take my leave. [*Exit.*

Queen. Weeps she still, say'st thou? Dost thou think in time
She will not quench,[4] and let instructions enter
Where folly now possesses? Do thou work:
When thou shalt bring me word she loves my son,
I'll tell thee on the instant thou art then
As great as is thy master; greater; for
His fortunes all lie speechless, and his name
Is at last gasp: return he cannot, nor
Continue where he is: to shift his being[5]
Is to exchange one misery with another;
And every day that comes comes to decay
A day's work in him. What shalt thou expect,
To be depender[6] on a thing that leans;
Who cannot be new built, nor has no friends,

[*The* Queen *drops the box;* PISANIO *takes it up.*

So much as but to prop him? Thou takest up

[3] This speech might be cited as proving that Shakespeare preferred expectation to surprise as an element of dramatic interest. Johnson thought it "very inartificial" that Cornelius should thus "make a long speech to tell himself what he already knows." And the speech seems fairly open to some such reproof. But it prepares, and was doubtless meant to prepare, us for the seeming death and revival of Imogen; and without some such preparation those incidents would be open to the much graver censure of clap-trap. The expectancy thus started is at all events better than attempting to spring a vulgar sensation upon the audience.

[4] To *quench* must here mean to *grow cool;* an odd use of the word.

[5] "To *shift* his *being*," is to *change* his *dwelling* or his place of abode.

[6] The infinitive used gerundively. So that the meaning is, "*by being* depender," &c., or *from being*. And so before, in scene iii.: "I would have broke mine eye-strings, crack'd the balls, *to look* upon him;" that is, *by looking*.

Thou know'st not what; but take it for thy labour:
It is a thing I made, which hath the King
Five times redeem'd from death: I do not know
What is more cordial. Nay, I pr'ythee, take it;
It is an earnest of a further good
That I mean to thee. Tell thy mistress how
The case stands with her; do't as from thyself.
Think what a chance thou chancest on; but think
Thou hast thy mistress still; to boot, my son,
Who shall take notice of thee. I'll move the King
To any shape of thy preferment, such
As thou'lt desire; and then myself, I chiefly,
That set thee on to this desert, am bound
To load thy merit richly. Call my women:
Think on my words. — [*Exit* PISANIO.
A sly and constant knave;
Not to be shaked; the agent for his master;
And the remembrancer of her to hold
The hand-fast[7] to her lord. I've given him that
Which, if he take, shall quite unpeople her
Of liegers[8] for her sweet; and which she after,
Except she bend her humour, shall be assured
To taste of too. —

Re-enter PISANIO *and* Ladies.

So, so; well done, well done:
The violets, cowslips, and the primroses,
Bear to my closet. — Fare thee well, Pisanio;
Think on my words. [*Exeunt* Queen *and* Ladies.

Pis. And shall do:
But when to my good lord I prove untrue,
I'll choke myself; there's all I'll do for you. [*Exit.*

[7] *Hand-fast* is the same as *troth-plight*, or *marriage*.

[8] A *lieger* is an ambassador; one that resides in a foreign Court to promote his master's interest. See vol. vi. page 181, note 8.

SCENE VI. — *The Same. Another Room in the Palace.*

Enter IMOGEN.

Imo. A father cruel, and a step-dame false;
A foolish suitor to a wedded lady,
That hath her husband banish'd; — O, that husband!
My supreme crown of grief! and those repeated
Vexations of it! Had I been thief-stol'n,
As my two brothers, happy! Blest be those,
How mean soe'er, that have their honest wills;
Which seasons comfort:[1] but most miserable
Is the desire that's glorious. Who may this be? Fie!

Enter PISANIO *and* IACHIMO.

Pis. Madam, a noble gentleman of Rome
Comes from my lord with letters.
Iach. Change you, madam?
The worthy Leonatus is in safety,
And greets your Highness dearly. [*Presents a letter.*
Imo. Thanks, good sir:
You're kindly welcome.
Iach. [*Aside.*] All of her that is out of door most rich!
If she be furnish'd with a mind so rare,
She is alone th' Arabian bird;[2] and I
Have lost the wager. Boldness be my friend!
Arm me, audacity, from head to foot!

[1] To *season* a thing is to give it a relish: the word is constantly so used in cookery. — The meaning of the passage is, the homely freedom of those who dwell in the poorest cottages, those who are left to the enjoyment of their honest wills, is what puts a relish into the comforts of life, and makes them blessings indeed.

[2] The Arabian bird is the Phœnix, of which there could be but one living at once; and so it had no equal. The Poet uses it repeatedly in comparisons. See vol. xvi. page 72, note 1.

Or, like the Parthian, I shall flying fight;
Rather, directly fly.

Imo. [Reads.] *He is one of the noblest note, to whose kindnesses I am most infinitely tied. Reflect upon him accordingly, as you value your trust.*[3]—— LEONATUS.

So far I read aloud:
But even the very middle of my heart
Is warm'd by th' rest, and takes it thankfully.—
You are as welcome, worthy sir, as I
Have words to bid you; and shall find it so,
In all that I can do.

Iach. Thanks, fairest lady.—
What, are men mad? Hath Nature given them eyes
To see this vaulted arch and the rich scope
Of sea and land, which can distinguish 'twixt
The fiery orbs above, and the twinn'd stones
Upon th' unnumber'd beach?[4] and can we not
Partition make with spectacles so precious
'Twixt fair and foul?

Imo. What makes your admiration?[5]

Iach. It cannot be i' the eye; for apes and monkeys,
'Twixt two such shes, would chatter this way, and
Contemn with mows[6] the other: nor i' the judgment;
For idiots, in this case of favour, would
Be wisely definite: nor i' the appetite;

3 "Your *trust*," here, is "*my* trust in you," or "the trust I repose in you." Observe, Imogen reads aloud only the first two sentences of the letter, and then skips all the rest till she comes to the signature, which she also pronounces aloud. For this use of the genitive see vol. vii. page 92, note 3.

4 Which can distinguish betwixt the pebbles, though as like one another as twins, that lie numberless on the beach. *Unnumber'd* for *innumerable*. Shakespeare has many instances of like usage. See vol. xv. page 122, note 3.—*Partition*, in the next line, means *distinction*.

5 "What *causes* your *wonder?*" *Admiration* in its Latin sense.

6 *Mows* is *wry faces;* as to *mow* or *moe* is to *make mouths*.

Sluttery, to such neat excellence opposed,
Should make desire vomit from emptiness,[7]
Not so allured to feed.

Imo. What is the matter, trow?[8]

Iach. The cloyèd will, —
That satiate yet unsatisfied desire, that tub
Both fill'd and running, — ravening first the lamb,
Longs after for the garbage.

Imo. What, dear sir,
Thus raps you?[9] Are you well?

Iach. Thanks, madam; well. — [*To* PISANIO.] Beseech you, sir, desire[10]
My man's abode where I did leave him: he
Is strange and peevish.[11]

Pis. I was going, sir,
To give him welcome. [*Exit.*

Imo. Continues well my lord? His health, beseech you?

Iach. Well, madam.

Imo. Is he disposed to mirth? I hope he is.

Iach. Exceeding pleasant; none a stranger there
So merry and so gamesome: he is call'd
The Briton reveller.

Imo. When he was here
He did incline to sadness, and oft-times

[7] Would make a hungry man vomit from an empty stomach. *Should* for *would;* as *would* occurs just before in the same construction; the two being often used indiscriminately.

[8] *Trow* was sometimes used for *I wonder*. See vol. vi. page 29, note 14.

[9] "What casts you into such a *rapture* or trance? what so ravishes you from yourself?" Walker quotes a like instance of *rap* from Shirley:

> Prithee, unlock thy word's sweet treasury,
> And *rape* me with the music of thy tongue.

[10] *Desire* here means *seek*, or *inquire out*.

[11] He is a *stranger* here, and is *foolish*, or *ignorant*. This use of *peevish* in the sense of *foolish* was very common.

Not knowing why.
Iach. I never saw him sad.
There is a Frenchman his companion, one
An eminent monsieur, that, it seems, much loves
A Gallian girl at home; he furnaces
The thick sighs from him;[12] whiles the jolly Briton —
Your lord, I mean — laughs from's free lungs; cries *O,*
Can my sides hold, to think that man — who knows
By history, report, or his own proof,
What woman is, yea, what she cannot choose
But must be — will his free hours languish for
Assurèd bondage?
Imo. Will my lord say so?
Iach. Ay, madam; with his eyes in flood with laughter:
It is a recreation to be by,
And hear him mock the Frenchman. But, Heavens know,
Some men are much to blame.
Imo. Not he, I hope.
Iach. Not he: but yet Heaven's bounty towards him might
Be used more thankfully: in himself, 'tis much;
In you, — which I 'count his, — beyond all talents.[13]
Whilst I am bound to wonder, I am bound
To pity too.
Imo. What do you pity, sir?
Iach. Two creatures heartily.
Imo. Am I one, sir?
You look on me: what wreck discern you in me
Deserves your pity?

[12] The sigh-like noise of furnaces appears to have been a favourite source of imagery with Shakespeare. So in *As You Like It*, ii. 7: "And then the lover, *sighing* like *furnace*."

[13] The meaning appears to be, "Heaven's bounty towards him in his own person is great; but in you, — for I regard you as his treasure, — it is beyond all estimate of riches."

Iach. Lamentable! What!
To hide me from the radiant Sun, and solace
I' the dungeon by a snuff?
Imo. I pray you, sir,
Deliver with more openness your answers
To my demands. Why do you pity me?
Iach. That others do —
I was about to say — enjoy your —— But
It is an office of the gods to venge it,
Not mine to speak on't.
Imo. You do seem to know
Something of me, or what concerns me: pray you, —
Since doubting things go ill [14] often hurts more
Than to be sure they do; for certainties
Either are past remedies, or, timely knowing,
The remedy then born, — discover to me
What both you spur and stop.[15]
Iach. Had I this cheek
To bathe my lips upon; this hand, whose touch,
Whose every touch, would force the feeler's soul
To th' oath of loyalty; this object, which
Takes prisoner the wild motion of mine eye,
Fixing it only here; should I — damn'd then —
Slaver with lips as common as the stairs
That mount the Capitol; join gripes with hands
Made hard with hourly falsehood,[16] — falsehood, as
With labour; then lie peeping in an eye

[14] That is, "since *fearing that* things go ill." The Poet often has *doubt* in its old sense of *fear* or *suspect*. See vol. xiv. page 164, note 45.

[15] The information which you seem to press forward and yet withhold. The allusion is to horsemanship. So in Sidney's *Arcadia*: "She was like a horse desirous to runne, and miserably *spurred*, but so *short-reined*, as he cannot stirre forward."

[16] Made hard by hourly clasping hands in vowing friendship, or in sealing covenants, falsely.

Base and unlustrous as the smoky light
That's fed with stinking tallow ; — it were fit
That all the plagues of Hell should at one time
Encounter such revolt.

Imo. My lord, I fear,
Has forgot Britain.

Iach. And himself. Not I,
Inclined to this intelligence, pronounce
The beggary of his change ; but 'tis your graces
That from my mutest conscience to my tongue
Charms this report out.

Imo. Let me hear no more.

Iach. O dearest soul, your cause doth strike my heart
With pity, that doth make me sick ! A lady
So fair, and fasten'd to an empery
Would make the great'st king double,[17] to be partner'd
With tomboys, hired with that self exhibition [18]
Which your own coffers yield ! with diseased ventures
That play with all infirmities for gold
Which rottenness can lend nature ! such boil'd stuff [19]
As well might poison poison ! Be revenged ;
Or she that bore you was no queen, and you
Recoil from your great stock.

Imo. Revenged !
How should I be revenged ? If this be true, —
As I have such a heart that both mine ears
Must not in haste abuse, — if it be true,
How should I be revenged ?

[17] And fasten'd, by inheritance, to such an *empire* or *kingdom* as would double the power of the greatest king.

[18] *Self* is here used for *self-same.* — *Tomboy*, which is now applied sometimes to a rude romping girl, formerly meant a wanton. — *Exhibition* is *allowance* or *maintenance.* See vol. xvii. page 185, note 27.

[19] Alluding to the old mode of treating what was called the French disease, by using "the sweating-tub." See vol. xv. page 223, note 6.

Iach. Should he make me [20]
Lie, like Diana's priest, betwixt cold sheets,
Whiles he is vaulting variable ramps,
In your despite, upon your purse? Revenge it.
I dedicate myself to your sweet pleasure;
More noble than that runagate to your bed;
And will continue fast to your affection,
Still close as sure.

Imo. What, ho, Pisanio!

Iach. Let me my service tender on your lips.

Imo. Away! I do condemn mine ears that have
So long attended thee. If thou wert honourable,
Thou wouldst have told this tale for virtue, not
For such an end thou seek'st, — as base as strange.
Thou wrong'st a gentleman who is as far
From thy report as thou from honour; and
Solicit'st here a lady that disdains
Thee and the Devil alike. — What ho, Pisanio! —
The King my father shall be made acquainted
Of thy assault: if he shall think it fit,
A saucy stranger, in his Court, to mart
As in a Romish [21] stew, and to expound
His beastly mind to us, he hath a Court
He little cares for, and a daughter who
He not respects at all. — What, ho, Pisanio! —

Iach. O happy Leonatus! I may say:
The credit that thy lady hath of thee
Deserves thy trust; and thy most perfect goodness
Her assured credit. — Blessèd live you long!

[20] A pretty bold ellipsis. The meaning is, "*If I were you*, should he," &c. — Diana's priests were *maiden* priests. So, in *Pericles*, v. 2, Diana says, "When my *maiden priests* are met together."

[21] *Romish* for *Roman* was the language of the time. — To *mart* is to *trade* or *traffic*. See vol. xiv. page 148, note 25.

A lady to the worthiest sir that ever
Country call'd his ! and you his mistress, only
For the most worthiest fit ! Give me your pardon.
I have spoke this, to know if your affiance
Were deeply rooted ; and shall make your lord,
That which he is, new o'er : and he is one
The truest-manner'd ; such a holy witch,
That he enchants societies unto him ;
Half all men's hearts are his.

Imo. You make amends.

Iach. He sits 'mongst men like a descended god ;
He hath a kind of honour sets him off,
More than a mortal seeming. Be not angry,
Most mighty Princess, that I have adventured
To try your taking of a false report ; which hath
Honour'd with confirmation your great judgment
In the election of a sir so rare,
Which you know cannot err :[22] the love I bear him
Made me to fan you thus ; but the gods made you,
Unlike all others, chaffless. Pray, your pardon.

Imo. All's well, sir : take my power i' the Court for yours.

Iach. My humble thanks. I had almost forgot
T' entreat your Grace but in a small request,
And yet of moment too, for it concerns
Your lord ; myself and other noble friends
Are partners in the business.

Imo. Pray, what is't?

Iach. Some dozen Romans of us, and your lord, —
The best feather of our wing, — have mingled sums
To buy a present for the Emperor ;
Which I, the factor for the rest, have done

[22] *Which*, in this clause, probably refers to *judgment*, and the sense of *cannot err* is limited to the particular matter in hand : "Which cannot *be wrong* or *in error* as to the character of your husband."

In France: 'tis plate of rare device, and jewels
Of rich and exquisite form; their values great;
And I am something curious, being strange,[23]
To have them in safe stowage: may it please you
To take them in protection?

Imo. Willingly;
And pawn mine honour for their safety: since
My lord hath interest in them, I will keep them
In my bedchamber.

Iach. They are in a trunk,
Attended by my men: I will make bold
To send them to you, only for this night;
I must aboard to-morrow.

Imo. O, no, no.

Iach. Yes, I beseech; or I shall short my word
By lengthening my return. From Gallia
I cross'd the seas on purpose and on promise
To see your Grace.

Imo. I thank you for your pains:
But not away to-morrow!

Iach. O, I must, madam:
Therefore I shall beseech you, if you please
To greet your lord with writing, do't to-night:
I have outstood my time; which is material
To th' tender of our present.

Imo. I will write.
Send your trunk to me; it shall safe be kept,
And truly yielded you. You're very welcome. [*Exeunt.*

[23] *Curious*, here, is *scrupulous* or *particular*. *Strange*, again, for *stranger*.

ACT II.

Scene I. — *Britain. Court before* Cymbeline's *Palace.*

Enter Cloten *and two* Lords.

Clo. Was there ever man had such luck? when I kiss'd the jack, upon an up-cast to be hit away![1] I had a hundred pound on't. And then a whoreson jackanapes must take me up for swearing; as if I borrowed mine oaths of him, and might not spend them at my pleasure.

1 Lord. What got he by that? You have broke his pate with your bowl.

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] If his wit had been like him that broke it, it would have run all out.

Clo. When a gentleman is disposed to swear, it is not for any standers-by to curtail his oaths, ha?

2 Lord. No, my lord; — [*Aside.*] nor crop the ears of them.

Clo. Whoreson dog! I give him satisfaction? Would he had been one of my rank!

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] To have smelt like a fool.

Clo. I am not vex'd more at any thing in the Earth. A pox on't! I had rather not be so noble as I am; they dare not fight with me, because of the Queen my mother: every Jack-slave hath his bellyful of fighting, and I must go up and down like a cock that nobody can match.

[1] He is describing his fate at bowls. The *jack* is the small bowl at which the others are aimed: he who is nearest to it wins. "To kiss the jack" is a state of great advantage. Cloten's bowl was *hit away* by the *upcast* of another bowler. So Rowley, in *A Woman never Vexed:* "This city *bowler* has *kiss'd* the *mistress* at the first *cast.*" The *jack* was also called *mistress.* See vol. xvi. page 262, note 7.

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] You are cock and capon too; and you crow, cock, with your comb on.[2]

Clo. Sayest thou?

2 Lord. It is not fit your lordship should undertake every companion[3] that you give offence to.

Clo. No, I know that: but it is fit I should commit offence to my inferiors.

2 Lord. Ay, it is fit for your lordship only.

Clo. Why, so I say.

1 Lord. Did you hear of a stranger that's come to Court to-night?

Clo. A stranger, and I not know on't!

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] He's a strange fellow himself, and knows it not.

1 Lord. There's an Italian come; and, 'tis thought, one of Leonatus' friends.

Clo. Leonatus! a banish'd rascal; and he's another, whatsoever he be. Who told you of this stranger?

1 Lord. One of your lordship's pages.

Clo. Is it fit I went to look upon him? is there no derogation in't?

1 Lord. You cannot derogate, my lord.

Clo. Not easily, I think.

2 Lord. [*Aside.*] You are a fool granted; therefore your issues, being foolish, do not derogate.

Clo. Come, I'll go see this Italian: what I have lost to-day at bowls I'll win to-night of him. Come, go.

2 Lord. I'll attend your lordship. —

[*Exeunt* CLOTEN *and First* Lord.

That such a crafty devil as is his mother

[2] Meaning, probably, "you are a coxcomb." A cock's comb was one of the badges of the professional Fool, and hence the compound came to mean a *simpleton.*

[3] *Companion* was often used in contempt, as *fellow* is now.

Should yield the world this ass! a woman that
Bears all down with her brain; and this her son
Cannot take two from twenty, for his heart,
And leave eighteen. Alas, poor Princess,
Thou divine Imogen, what thou endurest,
Betwixt a father by thy step-dame govern'd,
A mother hourly coining plots, a wooer
More hateful than the foul expulsion is
Of thy dear husband, than that horrid act
Of the divorce he'd make! The Heavens hold firm
The walls of thy dear honour; keep unshaked
That temple, thy fair mind; that thou mayst stand,
T' enjoy thy banish'd lord and this great land! [*Exit.*

SCENE II. — *The Same.* IMOGEN'S *bedchamber in* CYMBELINE'S *Palace: a trunk in one corner of it.*

IMOGEN *in bed, reading; a* Lady *attending.*

Imo. Who's there? my woman Helen?
Lady. Please you, madam.
Imo. What hour is it?
Lady. Almost midnight, madam.
Imo. I have read three hours, then; mine eyes are weak:
Fold down the leaf where I have left. To bed:
Take not away the taper, leave it burning;
And, if thou canst awake by four o' the clock,
I pr'ythee, call me. Sleep hath seized me wholly. —
[*Exit* Lady.
To your protection I commend me, gods!
From fairies, and the tempters of the night,
Guard me, beseech ye!
[*Sleeps.* IACHIMO *comes from the trunk.*
Iach. The crickets sing, and man's o'er-labour'd sense

Repairs itself by rest. Our Tarquin thus
Did softly press the rushes, ere he waken'd
The chastity he wounded. — Cytherea,
How bravely thou becomest thy bed! fresh lily!
And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch!
But kiss; one kiss! Rubies unparagon'd,
How dearly they do't![1] 'Tis her breathing that
Perfumes the chamber thus: the flame o' the taper
Bows toward her; and would under-peep her lids,
To see th' enclosèd lights, now canopied
Under these windows[2] — white and azure — laced
With blue of heaven's own tinct.[3] But my design's
To note the chamber. I will write all down:
Such and such pictures; there the windows; such
Th' adornment of her bed; the arras, figures,
Why, such and such; and the contents o' the story.
Ah, but some natural notes about her body,
Above ten thousand meaner movables,
Would testify, t' enrich mine inventory. —
O sleep, thou ape of death, lie dull upon her!
And be her sense but as a monument,[4]

1 That is, how dearly do her ruby lips *kiss each other*. Iachimo of course does not venture to kiss the lips that are so tempting.

2 The *windows* of the eyes are the *eyelids*. So in *Romeo and Juliet*: "Thy eyes' *windows* fall, like death when he shuts up the day of life." And in *Venus and Adonis*:

> The night of sorrow now is turn'd to day;
> Her two *blue windows* faintly she up-heaveth.

3 This is an exact description of the eyelid of a fair beauty, which is white, laced with veins of blue. Observe, *laced* agrees with *windows*, not with *white and azure*; for the *azure* is the "blue of heaven's own tinct." Perhaps the sense would be clearer thus: "white *with* azure laced, *the* blue," &c. Drayton seems to have had this passage in his mind:

> And these sweet *veins* by nature rightly placed,
> Wherewith she seems the white *skin* to have *laced*.

4 *Monument* for *statue*, *image*, or any monumental *figure*.

Thus in a chapel lying! — Come off, come off;
[*Taking off her bracelet.*
As slippery as the Gordian knot was hard!
'Tis mine; and this will witness outwardly,
As strongly as the conscience[5] does within,
To th' madding of her lord. On her left breast
A mole cinque-spotted,[6] like the crimson drops
I' the bottom of a cowslip: here's a voucher
Stronger than ever law could make: this secret
Will force him think I've pick'd the lock, and ta'en
The treasure of her honour. No more. To what end?
Why should I write this down, that's riveted,
Screw'd to my memory? She hath been reading late
The tale of Tereus:[7] here the leaf's turn'd down
Where Philomel gave up. I have enough:
To th' trunk again, and shut the spring of it. —
Swift, swift, you dragons of the night,[8] that dawning
May bare the raven's eye![9] I lodge in fear;
Though this a heavenly angel, Hell is here. [*Clock strikes.*
One, two, three, — Time, time![10]
[*Goes into the trunk. Scene closes.*

[5] *Conscience* has no reference to Posthumus. As strongly as the conscience of any guilty person witnesses to the fact of his guilt.

[6] Some readers may like to be told that *cinque* means *five*.

[7] *Tereus and Progne* is the second tale in *A Petite Palace of Pettie his Pleasure*, 1576. The story is related in Ovid, *Metam.* l. vi.; and by Gower in his *Confessio Amantis*. See vol. xiii. page 44, note 3.

[8] The task of drawing the chariot of Night was assigned to dragons, on account of their supposed watchfulness. See vol. iii. page 61, note 36.

[9] May *make bare* or *open* the raven's eye. The raven, being a very early stirrer, is here referred to as having its eye opened by the dawn.

[10] The inexpressible purity and delicacy of this scene has been often commended. The description of Imogen would almost engage our respect upon the describer, but that we already know Iachimo to be one of those passionless minds in which gross thoughts are most apt to lodge; and that the unaccustomed awe of virtue, which Imogen struck into him at their first interview, chastises down his tendencies to gross-thoughtedness while in her

SCENE III. — *The Same. An Ante-chamber adjoining* IMOGEN'S *Apartments in the Palace.*

Enter CLOTEN *and* Lords.

1 Lord. Your lordship is the most patient man in loss, the most coldest that ever turn'd up ace.

Clo. It would make any man cold to lose.

1 Lord. But not every man patient after the noble temper of your lordship. You are most hot and furious when you win.

Clo. Winning will put any man into courage. If I could get this foolish Imogen, I should have gold enough. It's almost morning, is't not?

1 Lord. Day, my lord.

Clo. I would this music would come! I am advised to give her music o' mornings; they say it will penetrate.—

Enter Musicians.

Come on; tune. If you can penetrate her with your fingering, so; we'll try with tongue too: if none will do, let her remain; but I'll never give o'er. First, a very excellent good-conceited[1] thing; after, a wonderful sweet air, with admirable rich words to it; and then let her consider.

SONG.

Hark, hark! the lark at Heaven's gate sings,[2]

presence. Thus his delicacy of speech only goes to heighten our impression of Imogen's character, inasmuch as it seems to come, not from him, but from her *through* him; and as something that must be divine indeed, not to be strangled in passing through such a medium.

1 *Good-conceited* is the same as *well-conceived* or *well-imagined.*

2 A similar figure occurs in *Paradise Lost*, v. 197: "Ye birds, that singing up to heaven-gate ascend, bear on your wings and in your notes His praise." And in Shakespeare's 29th *Sonnet:*

> Haply, I think on thee, and then my state,
> Like to the lark at break of day arising
> From sullen earth, sings hymns at Heaven's gate.

And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;[3]
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With every thing that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise;
Arise, arise!

Clo. So, get you gone. If this penetrate, I will consider your music the better:[4] if it do not, it is a vice in her ears, which horse-hairs and calves'-guts, nor the voice of unpaved[5] eunuch to boot, can never amend. [*Exeunt* Musicians.

2 Lord. Here comes the King.

Clo. I am glad I was up so late, for that's the reason I was up so early: he cannot choose but take this service I have done fatherly.—

Enter CYMBELINE *and the* Queen.

Good morrow to your Majesty and to my gracious mother.

The whole song may have been suggested by a passage in Lyly's *Alexander and Campaspe:*

Who is't now we hear?
None but the *lark* so shrill and clear:
Now at *heaven's gate* she claps her wings,
The morn not waking till she sings.
Hark, hark! with what a pretty throat
Poor robin red-breast tunes his note.

[3] The morning dries up the dew which lies in the *cups* of flowers called *calices* or chalices. The marigold is one of those flowers which close themselves up at sunset. So in the 25th Sonnet: "Great princes' favourites *their fair leaves spread,* but *as the marigold at the Sun's eye.*"—Such instances of false concord as *lies* were common with the older poets, and were not then breaches of grammar.

[4] Meaning, "I will pay you the more liberally for it."

[5] The word *unpaved* is superfluous here. An *unpaved man* is an eunuch. —The phrase *calves'-guts* is not meant as a Clotenism; but was used for *catgut,* which has no more to do with any thing belonging to a cat than with what belongs to a calf.

Cym. Attend you here the door of our stern daughter?
Will she not forth?

Clo. I have assail'd her with music, but she vouchsafes no notice.

Cym. The exile of her minion is too new;
She hath nor yet forgot him: some more time
Must wear the print of his remembrance out,
And then she's yours.

Queen. You are most bound to th' King,
Who lets go by no vantages that may
Prefer you to his daughter. Frame yourself
To orderly soliciting, and be friended
With aptness of the season; make denials
Increase your services; so seem as if
You were inspired to do those duties which
You tender to her; that you in all obey her,
Save when command to your dismission tends,
And therein you are senseless.

Clo. Senseless! not so.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. So like you, sir, ambassadors from Rome;
The one is Caius Lucius.

Cym. A worthy fellow,
Albeit he comes on angry purpose now;
But that's no fault of his: we must receive him
According to the honour of his sender;
And towards himself, his goodness forespent on us,
We must extend our notice.[6] — Our dear son,
When you have given good morning to your mistress,
Attend the Queen and us; we shall have need

6 "We must extend towards himself our notice *of* the goodness he has heretofore shown us." The Poet has many similar ellipses.

T' employ you towards this Roman. — Come, our Queen.
[*Exeunt all but* CLOTEN.

Clo. If she be up, I'll speak with her; if not,
Let her lie still and dream. — By your leave, ho! — [*Knocks.*
I know her women are about her: what
If I do line one of their hands? 'Tis gold
Which buys admittance; oft it doth; yea, makes
Diana's rangers false themselves,[7] yield up
Their deer to th' stand o' the stealer:[8] and 'tis gold
Which makes the true man kill'd, and saves the thief;
Nay, sometime hangs both thief and true man: what
Can it not do and undo? I will make
One of her women lawyer to me; for
I yet not understand the case myself. —
By your leave. [*Knocks.*

Enter a Lady.

Lady. Who's there that knocks?
Clo. A gentleman.
Lady. No more?
Clo. Yes, and a gentlewoman's son.
Lady. That's more
Than some, whose tailors are as dear as yours,
Can justly boast of. What's your lordship's pleasure?

[7] The use of to *false* for to *falsify* or to *perjure* was not uncommon. See vol. vii. page 19, note 27. — "Diana's rangers" are the train of *virgin* huntresses that used to "*range* the forest wild" in attendance upon the goddess. Of course they were deeply sworn to chastity. See vol. xvii. page 287, note 2.

[8] A *stand*, as the word seems to be used here, was an artificial place of concealment in a deer-park, where the hunter could lurk, and pick off the animals as they passed by. Such stands, or standings, were commonly made for the special convenience of ladies engaging in the sport. But the keeper of a park might betray his trust, and let a deer-stealer have the advantage of the place. Such appears to be the allusion here. See vol. vi. page 109, note 21.

Clo. Your lady's person: is she ready?
Lady. Ay,
To keep her chamber.
Clo. There is gold for you;
Sell me your good report.
Lady. How! my good name? or to report of you
What I shall think is good? The Princess!

Enter IMOGEN.

Clo. Good morrow, fairest: sister, your sweet hand.
[*Exit* Lady.
Imo. Good morrow, sir. You lay out too much pains
For purchasing but trouble: the thanks I give
Is telling you that I am poor of thanks,
And scarce can spare them.
Clo. Still, I swear I love you.
Imo. If you but said so, 'twere as deep with me:
If you swear still, your recompense is still
That I regard it not.
Clo. This is no answer.
Imo. But that you shall not say, I yield being silent,
I would not speak. I pray you, spare me: faith,
I shall unfold equal discourtesy
To your best kindness: one of your great knowing
Should learn, being taught, forbearance.
Clo. To leave you in your madness, 'twere my sin:
I will not.
Imo. Fools cure not mad folks.
Clo. Do you call me fool?
Imo. As I am mad, I do:
If you'll be patient, I'll no more be mad;
That cures us both. I am much sorry, sir,
You put me to forget a lady's manners,

By being so verbal:[9] and learn now, for all,
That I, which know my heart, do here pronounce,
By th' very truth of it, I care not for you;
And am so near the lack of charity,—
T' accuse myself,—I hate you;[10] which I had rather
You felt than make't my boast.

Clo. You sin against
Obedience, which you owe your father. For
The contract you pretend with that base wretch,—
One bred of alms, and foster'd with cold dishes,
With scraps o' the Court,—it is no contract, none:
And though it be allow'd in meaner parties—
Yet who than he more mean?—to knit their souls—
On whom there is no more dependency
But brats and beggary—in self-figured knot;[11]
Yet you are curb'd from that enlargement by
The consequence o' the crown; and must not soil
The precious note of it with a base slave,
A hilding for a livery,[12] a squire's cloth,
A pantler,—not so eminent.

Imo. Profane fellow!
Wert thou the son of Jupiter, and no more
But what thou art besides, thou wert too base
To be his groom: thou wert dignified enough,

[9] This is commonly explained, "being so *verbose*, so full of talk." It rather seems to me, that Imogen refers to his forcing her thus to the discourtesy of expressing her mind to him, of putting her *thoughts* into *words*.

[10] "I am so near the lack of charity *as to* hate you," is the meaning.

[11] In knots of their own tying; that is, marrying to suit themselves; whereas the expectant of a throne must marry to serve the interests of his or her position.

[12] A vile wretch, only fit to wear a livery, which was a badge of servitude. *Hilding* was a common term of reproach. See vol. ii. page 173, note 1.—*Cloth* seems to be in apposition with *livery;* or, as a squire was properly the servant of a knight, it may carry the further meaning of being servant to a servant, and badged accordingly.

Even to the point of envy, if 'twere made
Comparative for your virtues, to be styled
The under-hangman of his kingdom; and hated
For being preferr'd so well.[13]

Clo. The south-fog rot him!

Imo. He never can meet more mischance than come
To be but named of thee. His meanest garment,
That ever hath but clipp'd his body, is dearer
In my respect than all the hairs above thee,
Were they all made such men.—Ho, now, Pisanio!

Enter PISANIO.

Clo. *His garment!* Now, the Devil—

Imo. To Dorothy my woman hie thee presently;—

Clo. *His garment!*

Imo. I am sprighted with a fool;[14]
Frighted, and anger'd worse;—go bid my woman
Search for a jewel that too casually
Hath left mine arm: it was thy master's; 'shrew me,
If I would lose it for a révenue
Of any king's in Europe. I do think
I saw't this morning: confident I am
Last night 'twas on mine arm; I kiss'd it:
I hope it be not gone to tell my lord
That I kiss aught but he.

Pis. 'Twill not be lost.

Imo. I hope so: go and search. [*Exit* PISANIO.

Clo. You have abused me:
His meanest garment!

[13] "If your dignity were made *proportionable* to your merits, you were honoured enough *in being* styled the under-hangman of his kingdom; and even that place would be so much too good for you as to make you an object of envy and hatred."

[14] Haunted by a fool, as by a *spright*, is the meaning.

Imo. Ay, I said so, sir:
If you will make't an action, call witness to't.
Clo. I will inform your father.
Imo. Your mother too:
She's my good lady;[15] and will conceive, I hope,
But the worst of me. So, I leave you, sir,
To th' worst of discontent. [*Exit.*
Clo. I'll be revenged.
His meanest garment! Well. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*Rome. An Apartment in* PHILARIO'S *House.*

Enter POSTHUMUS *and* PHILARIO.

Post. Fear it not, sir: I would I were so sure
To win the King, as I am bold her honour
Will remain hers.
Phi. What means do you make to him?
Post. Not any; but abide the change of time;
Quake in the present Winter's state, and wish
That warmer days would come: in these sere hopes,[1]
I barely gratify your love; they failing,
I must die much your debtor.
Phi. Your very goodness and your company
O'erpays all I can do. By this, your King
Hath heard of great Augustus: Caius Lucius
Will do's commission throughly; and I think
He'll grant the tribute, send th' arrearages,
Or[2] look upon our Romans, whose remembrance

[15] This is said ironically. To be my good lord or good lady was to be my particular friend or patron. See vol. xi. page 240, note 3.

[1] "*Sere* hopes" are *withered* hopes; as they would naturally be in their "Winter's state." See vol. vi. page 171, note 2.

[2] *Or* is an ancient equivalent for *ere*, as in the phrase *or ever;* and such is plainly the sense of it here. See vol. vii. page 14, note 3.

Is yet fresh in their grief.
Post. I do believe —
Statist[3] though I am none, nor like to be —
That this will prove a war; and you shall hear
The legions now in Gallia sooner landed
In our not-fearing Britain than have tidings
Of any penny tribute paid. Our countrymen
Are men more order'd than when Julius Cæsar
Smiled at their lack of skill, but found their courage
Worthy his frowning at: their discipline
Now mingled with their courage will make known
To their approvers[4] they are people such
That mend upon the world.
Phi. See! Iachimo!

Enter IACHIMO.

Post. The swiftest harts have posted you by land;
And winds of all the corners kiss'd your sails,
To make your vessel nimble.
Phi. Welcome, sir.
Post. I hope the briefness of your answer made
The speediness of your return.
Iach. Your lady
Is one o' the fairest that I've look'd upon.
Post. And therewithal the best; or let her beauty
Look through a casement to allure false hearts,
And be false with them.
Iach. Here are letters for you.
Post. Their tenour good, I trust.
Iach. 'Tis very like.

[3] *Statist* is an old word for *politician;* so used still; as in Wordsworth's *Poet's Epitaph:* "Art thou a *Statist* in the van of public conflicts trained and bred?"

[4] Those who try them, or *put them to the proof.*

Phi. Was Caius Lucius in the Britain Court
When you were there?
Iach. He was expected then,
But not approach'd.
Post. All is well yet.
Sparkles this stone as it was wont? or is't not
Too dull for your good wearing?
Iach. If I had lost it,
I should have lost the worth of it in gold.
I'll make a journey twice as far, t' enjoy
A second night of such sweet shortness which
Was mine in Britain; for the ring is won.
Post. The stone's too hard to come by.
Iach. Not a whit,
Your lady being so easy.
Post. Make not, sir,
Your loss your sport: I hope you know that we
Must not continue friends.
Iach. Good sir, we must,
If you keep covenant. Had I not brought
The knowledge of your mistress home, I grant
We were to question further: but I now
Profess myself the winner of her honour,
Together with your ring; and not the wronger
Of her or you, having proceeded but
By both your wills.
Post. If you can make't apparent
That you have tasted her in bed, my hand
And ring is yours; if not, the foul opinion
You had of her pure honour gains or loses
Your sword or mine, or masterless leaves both
To who shall find them.
Iach. Sir, my circumstances,
Being so near the truth as I will make them,

Must first induce you to believe; whose strength
I will confirm with oath; which, I doubt not,
You'll give me leave to spare, when you shall find
You need it not.

Post. Proceed.

Iach. First, her bedchamber, —
Where, I confess, I slept not; but profess
Had that was well worth watching, — it was hang'd
With tapestry of silk and silver; the story
Proud Cleopatra, when she met her Roman,
And Cydnus swell'd above the banks, or for
The press of boats or pride: a piece of work
So bravely done, so rich, that it did strive
In workmanship and value; which I wonder'd
Could be so rarely and exactly wrought,
Since the true life on't was[5] —

Post. This is true;
And this you might have heard of here, by me
Or by some other.

Iach. More particulars
Must justify my knowledge.

Post. So they must,
Or do your honour injury.

Iach. The chimney
Is south the chamber; and the chimney-piece
Chaste Dian bathing: never saw I figures
So likely to report themselves: the cutter
Was as another Nature, dumb;[6] outwent her,

[5] "Iachimo's language," says Johnson, "is such as a skilful villain would naturally use; a mixture of airy triumph and serious deposition. His gayety shows his seriousness to be without anxiety, and his seriousness proves his gayety to be without art."

[6] A *speaking picture* is a common figurative expression. The meaning of the passage is, "The *sculptor* was as *Nature dumb;* he gave every thing that Nature gives but breath and motion." In *breath* is included *speech.*

Motion and breath left out.
Post. This is a thing
Which you might from relation likewise reap,
Being, as it is, much spoke of.
Iach. The roof o' the chamber
With golden cherubins is fretted: her andirons —
I had forgot them — were two winking Cupids
Of silver, each on one foot standing, nicely
Depending on their brands.[7]
Post. This is her honour!
Let it be granted you have seen all this, — and praise
Be given to your remembrance, — the description
Of what is in her chamber nothing saves
The wager you have laid.
Iach. Then, if you can,
[*Pulling out the bracelet.*
Be pale: I beg but leave to air this jewel; see!
And now 'tis up again: it must be married
To that your diamond; I'll keep them.
Post. Jove!
Once more let me behold it: is it that
Which I left with her?
Iach. Sir, — I thank her, — that:
She stripp'd it from her arm; I see her yet;
Her pretty action did outsell her gift,
And yet enrich'd it too: she gave it me, and said
She prized it once.
Post. May be she pluck'd it off
To send it me.

[7] The *andirons* of our ancestors were sometimes costly pieces of furniture; the *standards* were often, as in this instance, of silver, and representing some *terminal* figure or device; the transverse or horizontal pieces, upon which the wood was supported, were what Shakespeare here calls the *brands*, properly *brandirons*. Upon these the Cupids which formed the standards *nicely depended*, seeming to stand on one foot.

Iach. She writes so to you, doth she?
Post. O, no, no, no! 'tis true. Here, take this too;
[*Gives the ring.*
It is a basilisk[8] unto mine eye,
Kills me to look on't. Let there be no honour
Where there is beauty; truth, where semblance; love,
Where there's another man: the vows of women
Of no more bondage[9] be, to where they're made,
Than they are to their virtues; which is nothing.
O, above measure false!
Phi. Have patience, sir,
And take your ring again; 'tis not yet won:
It may be probable she lost it; or
Who knows if one o' her women, being corrupted,
Hath stol'n it from her?
Post. Very true;
And so, I hope, he came by't. — Back my ring:
Render to me some corporal sign about her,
More evident than this; for this was stol'n.
Iach. By Jupiter, I had it from her arm.
Post. Hark you, he swears; by Jupiter he swears.
'Tis true, — nay, keep the ring, — 'tis true. I'm sure
She would not lose it: her attendants are
All sworn[10] and honourable. They induced to steal it?
And by a stranger? No! he hath enjoy'd her:
The cognizance of her incontinency
Is this:[11] she hath bought the name of whore thus dearly. —

[8] The basilisk was an imaginary reptile of strange powers, to which the Poet has many allusions. See vol. ix. page 154, note 15.

[9] *Bondage* for *binding force* or *efficacy*. An odd use of the word.

[10] It was anciently the custom for the servants of great families (as it is now for the servants of the King) to take an oath of fidelity on their entrance into office.

[11] This fact of Iachimo's having the bracelet is the *token* or *acknowledgment* of her incontinency.

There, take thy hire; and all the fiends of Hell
Divide themselves between you!
Phi. Sir, be patient:
This is not strong enough to be believed
Of one persuaded well of—
Post. Never talk on't;
She hath been colted by him.
Iach. If you seek
For further satisfying, under her breast—
Worthy the pressing—lies a mole, right proud
Of that most delicate lodging: by my life,
I kiss'd it; and it gave me present hunger
To feed again, though full. You do remember
This stain upon her?
Post. Ay; and it doth confirm
Another stain, as big as Hell can hold,
Were there no more but it.
Iach. Will you hear more?
Post. Spare your arithmetic: never count the turns;
Once, and a million!
Iach. I'll be sworn—
Post. No swearing.
If you will swear you have not done't, you lie;
And I will kill thee, if thou dost deny
Thou'st made me cuckold.
Iach. I'll deny nothing.
Post. O, that I had her here, to tear her limb-meal!
I will go there and do't; i' the Court; before
Her father. I'll do something— [*Exit.*
Phi. Quite beside
The government of patience! You have won:
Let's follow him, and pervert[12] the present wrath

[12] *Avert.* To *pervert* a thing means properly to turn or wrest it utterly

He hath against himself.
Iach. With all my heart. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. — *The Same. Another Room in* PHILARIO'S *House.*

Enter POSTHUMUS.

Post. Is there no way for men to be, but women
Must be half-workers? We are bastards all;
And that most venerable man which I
Did call my father was I know not where
When I was stamp'd; some coiner with his tools
Made me a counterfeit: yet my mother seem'd
The Dian of that time; so doth my wife
The nonpareil of this. O, vengeance, vengeance!
Me of my lawful pleasure she restrain'd,
And pray'd me oft forbearance; did it with
A pudency so rosy, the sweet view on't
Might well have warm'd old Saturn; that I thought her
As chaste as unsunn'd snow. O, all the devils!
This yellow Iachimo, in an hour, — was't not? —
Or less, — at first; — perchance he spoke not, but,
Like a full-acorn'd boar, a German one,
Cried *O!* and mounted; found no opposition
But what he look'd for should oppose, and she
Should from encounter guard. Could I find out
The woman's part in me! For there's no motion
That tends to vice in man, but I affirm
It is the woman's part: be't lying, note it
The woman's; flattering, hers; deceiving, hers;
Lust and rank thoughts, hers, hers; revenges, hers;
Ambitions, covetings, change of prides, disdain,

away from its appointed end or purpose; the *per* having merely an intensive force.

Nice longing, slanders, mutability,
All faults that may be named, nay, that Hell knows,
Why, hers, in part or all; but rather, all:
For even to vice
They are not constant, but are changing still
One vice, but of a minute old, for one
Not half so old as that. I'll write against them,
Detest them, curse them: yet 'tis greater skill
In a true hate, to pray they have their will;
The very devils cannot plague them better. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Britain. A Room of State in* CYMBELINE'S *Palace.*

Enter, from one side, CYMBELINE, *the* Queen, CLOTEN, *and* Lords; *from the other,* CAIUS LUCIUS *and* Attendants.

Cym. Now say, what would Augustus Cæsar with us?
Luc. When Julius Cæsar — whose remembrance yet
Lives in men's eyes, and will to ears and tongues
Be theme and hearing ever — was in this Britain
And conquer'd it, Cassibelan, thine uncle, —
Famous in Cæsar's praises, no whit less
Than in his feats deserving it, — for him
And his succession granted Rome a tribute,
Yearly three thousand pounds; which by thee lately
Is left untender'd.
Queen. And, to kill the marvel,
Shall be so ever.
Clo. There be many Cæsars,
Ere such another Julius. Britain is
A world by itself; and we will nothing pay
For wearing our own noses.

Queen. That opportunity,
Which then they had to take from's, to resume
We have again. — Remember, sir, my liege,
The Kings your ancestors; together with
The natural bravery of your isle, which stands
As Neptune's park, ribbèd and palèd in [1]
With rocks unscaleable and roaring waters;
With sands that will not bear your enemies' boats,
But suck them up to th' topmast. A kind of conquest
Cæsar made here; but made not here his brag
Of *Came, and saw, and overcame:* with shame —
The first that ever touch'd him — he was carried
From off our coast, twice beaten; and his shipping —
Poor ignorant baubles! — on our terrible seas,
Like egg-shells moved upon their surges, crack'd
As easily 'gainst our rocks: for joy whereof
The famed Cassibelan, who was once at point —
O giglot [2] Fortune! — to master Cæsar's sword,
Made Lud's-town with rejoicing fires bright,
And Britons strut with courage.

Clo. Come, there's no more tribute to be paid: our kingdom is stronger than it was at that time; and, as I said, there is no more such Cæsars: other of them may have crooked noses; but to owe such straight arms, none.[3]

Cym. Son, let your mother end.

Clo. We have yet many among us can gripe as hard as Cassibelan: I do not say I am one; but I have a hand. — Why tribute? why should we pay tribute? If Cæsar can

[1] *Ribbed* is *enclosed* or *fenced-in*, as *paled* is *surrounded with palings.*

[2] *Giglot*, adjective, is *false*, or *inconstant.* The word was also used substantively, in a similar sense. See vol. vi. page 235, note 30.

[3] The pith and shrewdness of this ungeared and loose-screwed genius here go right to the mark, although they go off out of time. Of course, to *owe* means to *own*, as usual.

hide the Sun from us with a blanket, or put the Moon in his pocket, we will pay him tribute for light; else, sir, no more tribute, pray you now.

Cym. You must know,
Till the injurious Romans did extort
This tribute from us, we were free: Cæsar's ambition, —
Which swell'd so much, that it did almost stretch
The sides o' the world, — against all colour,[4] here
Did put the yoke upon's; which to shake off
Becomes a warlike people, whom we reckon
Ourselves to be.

Clo. We do.

Cym. Say, then, to Cæsar,
Our ancestor was that Mulmutius which
Ordain'd our laws, whose use the sword of Cæsar
Hath too much mangled; whose repair and franchise
Shall, by the power we hold, be our good deed,
Though Rome be therefore angry. Mulmutius made our laws,
Who was the first of Britain which did put
His brows within a golden crown, and call'd
Himself a king.[5]

Luc. I'm sorry, Cymbeline,
That I am to pronounce Augustus Cæsar —
Cæsar, that hath more kings his servants than

[4] Against all colour or *appearance* of *right.*

[5] Here Holinshed was the Poet's authority: "Mulmutius, the son of Cloten, got the upper hand of the other dukes or rulers; and, after his father's decease, began to reign over the whole monarchy of Britain, in the year of the world 3529. He made many good laws, which were long after used, called Mulmutius' laws. After he had established his land, he ordained him, by the advice of his lords, a crown of gold, and caused himself with great solemnity to be crowned. And because he was the first that bore a crown here in Britain, after the opinion of some writers, he is named the first king of Britain, and all the other before rehearsed are named rulers, dukes, or governors."

Thyself domestic officers — thine enemy.
Receive it from me, then: War and confusion
In Cæsar's name pronounce I 'gainst thee: look
For fury not to be resisted. Thus defied,
I thank thee for myself.

Cym. Thou'rt welcome, Caius.
Thy Cæsar knighted me; my youth I spent
Much under him; of him I gather'd honour;
Which he to seek of me again, perforce,
Behoves me keep at utterance.[6] I am perfect[7]
That the Pannonians and Dalmatians for
Their liberties are now in arms, — a precedent
Which not to read would show the Britons cold:
So Cæsar shall not find them.

Luc. Let proof speak.

Clo. His Majesty bids you welcome. Make pastime with us a day or two, or longer: if you seek us afterwards in other terms, you shall find us in our salt-water girdle: if you beat us out of it, it is yours; if you fall in the adventure, our crows shall fare the better for you; and there's an end.

Luc. So, sir.

Cym. I know your master's pleasure, and he mine;
All the remain is, *Welcome.* [*Exeunt.*

[6] A very elliptical passage. The meaning appears to be, "Of him I gather'd honour; which, he being now about to force it away from me, *I am bound* to maintain to the last extremity." *At utterance* is *to the uttermost of defiance.* So in *Helyas Knight of the Swan:* "Here is my gage to sustain it *to the utterance*, and befight it to the death." See vol. xvii. page 60, note 13.

[7] *Perfect* is repeatedly used by Shakespeare for *well informed* or *assured.* See vol. vii. page 196, note 1.

SCENE II. — *The Same. Another Room in the Palace.*

Enter PISANIO, *with a letter.*

Pis. How! of adultery? Wherefore write you not
What monster's her accuser? Leonatus!
O master! what a strange infection
Is fall'n into thy ear! What false Italian,
As poisonous-tongued as handed, hath prevail'd
On thy too ready hearing? Disloyal! No:
She's punish'd for her truth;[1] and undergoes,
More goddess-like than wife-like, such assaults
As would take-in[2] some virtue. O my master!
Thy mind to her is now as low as were
Thy fortunes.[3] How! that I should murder her?
Upon the love, and truth, and vows, which I
Have made to thy command? I, her? her blood?
If it be so to do good service, never
Let me be counted serviceable. How look I,
That I should seem to lack humanity
So much as this fact comes to? *Do't: the letter
That I have sent her, by her own command
Shall give thee opportunity.*[4] O damn'd paper!
Black as the ink that's on thee! Senseless bauble,
Art thou a fedary[5] for this act, and look'st
So virgin-like without? Lo, here she comes.

[1] *Truth*, here, is *fidelity*, truthfulness to her marriage-vows.

[2] To *take-in* is *to conquer;* often so used. See vol. xvi. page 86, note 3.

[3] Thy mind *compared* to hers is now as low as thy condition was compared to hers before marriage.

[4] I print this as a quotation from the letter, though, as afterwards appears, the words are not found there. Pisanio is but repeating, in his own words, the substance of the letter while holding it in his hand.

[5] A *fedary* is properly a *subordinate agent;* but the word may here signify an *accomplice* or *confederate.* See vol. vii. page 167, note 7.

I'm ignorant in what I am commanded.[6]

Enter IMOGEN.

Imo. How now, Pisanio!

Pis. Madam, here is a letter from my lord.

Imo. Who? thy lord? that is my lord, Leonatus?
O, learn'd indeed were that astronomer
That knew the stars as I his characters;
He'd lay the future open. — You good gods,
Let what is here contain'd relish of love,
Of my lord's health, of his content, — yet not
That we two are asunder; let that grieve him:
Some griefs are med'cinable;[7] that is one of them,
For it doth physic love, — of his content
In all but that! — Good wax, thy leave. Bless'd be
You bees that make these locks of counsel! Lovers,
And men in dangerous bonds, pray not alike:
Though forfeiters you cast in prison,[8] yet
You clasp young Cupid's tables. — Good news, gods!

[Reads.] *Justice, and your father's wrath, should he take me in his dominion, could not be so cruel to me, but you, O the dearest of creatures, would even renew me with your eyes. Take notice that I am in Cambria, at Milford-Haven: what your own love will, out of this, advise you, follow. So, he wishes you all happiness, that remains loyal to his vow, and your, increasing in love,* LEONATUS POSTHUMUS.

6 Meaning, apparently, I will *seem* ignorant, will speak *as if I were* ignorant, of what is enjoined upon me.

7 *Medicinable* for *medicinal;* the passive form with the sense of the active; a common usage in the Poet's time.

8 Referring to the use of wax in sealing and authenticating legal instruments, such as warrants for the apprehension and confinement of criminals, or those who *have forfeited their freedom.* Imogen is playing on the different uses of sealing-wax in locking up the counsel of lovers and the persons of what she calls forfeiters.

O, for a horse with wings! — Hear'st thou, Pisanio?
He is at Milford-Haven: read, and tell me
How far 'tis thither. If one of mean affairs
May plod it in a week, why may not I
Glide thither in a day? Then, true Pisanio, —
Who long'st, like me, to see thy lord; who long'st, —
O, let me 'bate, — but not like me; — yet long'st, —
But in a fainter kind; — O, not like me;
For mine's beyond beyond; — say, and speak thick,[9] —
Love's counsellor should fill the bores of hearing,
To th' smothering of the sense, — how far it is
To this same blessèd Milford: and, by th' way,
Tell me how Wales was made so happy as
T' inherit such a haven: but, first of all,
How we may steal from hence; and for the gap
That we shall make in time, from our hence-going
Till our return, t' excuse:[10] but first, how to get hence:
Why should excuse be born or e'er begot?[11]
We'll talk of that hereafter. Pr'ythee, speak:
How many score of miles may we well ride
'Twixt hour and hour?[12]

Pis. One score 'twixt sun and sun,
Madam, 's enough for you, and too much too.

Imo. Why, one that rode to's execution, man,
Could never go so slow: I've heard of riding-wagers,[13]

[9] To speak *thick* is to speak *fast*. See vol. xvii. page 22, note 22.

[10] How to excuse for the gap that we shall make in time.

[11] *Before* the act is done for which excuse will be necessary.

[12] Between the same hours of morning and evening; or between six and six, as between sunrise and sunset, in the next speech.

[13] This practice was common in Shakespeare's time. Fynes Moryson, speaking of his brother's *putting out* money to be paid with interest on his return from Jerusalem, defends it as an honest means of gaining the charges of his journey, especially when "no meane lords and lords' sonnes, and gentlemen in our court, *put out* money *upon a horse-race under themselves*, yea, upon a journey afoote."

Where horses have been nimbler than the sands
That run i' the clock's behalf:[14] but this is foolery.
Go bid my woman feign a sickness; say
She'll home to her father: and provide me presently
A riding-suit, no costlier than would fit
A franklin's housewife.[15]

Pis. Madam, you're best[16] consider.

Imo. I see before me, man: nor here, nor here,
Nor what ensues, but have a fog in them,
That I cannot look through.[17] Away, I pr'ythee!
Do as I bid thee: there's no more to say;
Accessible is none but Milford way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. — *The Same. Wales: a mountainous Country with a Cave.*

Enter, from the cave, BELARIUS; *then* GUIDERIUS *and* ARVIRAGUS.

Bel. A goodly day not to keep house, with such
Whose roof's as low as ours! Stoop, boys: this gate
Instructs you how t' adore the Heavens, and bows you
To morning's holy office: the gates of monarchs
Are arch'd so high, that giants may jet[1] through

14 That is, *instead of* the clock. The reference is to the *sand of an hour-glass.* The meaning is, *swifter* than the flight of time.

15 A *franklin* is a *yeoman*, or *farmer.*

16 Shakespeare has many such contractions of *you were;* and such expressions as *you were best* for *it were best you should* are common in his plays; and are not unused even yet, especially in colloquial speech.

17 Imogen here speaks with her hand as well as with her tongue. "Neither the right side, nor the left, not what is behind me, but have a dense fog in them: the path straight before me to Milford is the only one where I can see my way." See, however, Critical Notes.

1 To *jet* is to *walk proudly,* to *strut.* See vol. v. page 180, note 5. In the popular idea, a *giant* was generally confounded with a *Saracen.* The two commonly figured together in the romances.

And keep their impious turbans on, without
Good morrow to the Sun. — Hail, thou fair heaven!
We house i' the rock, yet use thee not so hardly
As prouder livers do.
Gui. Hail, heaven!
Arv. Hail, heaven!
Bel. Now for our mountain sport: up to yond hill,
Your legs are young; I'll tread these flats. Consider,
When you above perceive me like a crow,
That it is place which lessens and sets off;
And you may then revolve what tales I've told you
Of Courts, of princes, of the tricks in war;
That service is not service, so being done,
But being so allow'd:[2] to apprehend thus,
Draws us a profit from all things we see;
And often, to our comfort, shall we find
The sharded[3] beetle in a safer hold
Than is the full-wing'd eagle. O, this life
Is nobler than attending for a check,
Richer than doing nothing for a bribe,[4]

[2] Here, as usual, *allow'd* is *approved* or *estimated.*

[3] *Sharded* is scaly-winged. See vol. xvii. page 65, note 12. — The epithet *full-winged*, applied to the eagle, sufficiently marks the contrast of the Poet's imagery; for, whilst the bird can soar beyond the reach of human eye, the insect can but just rise above the surface of the earth, and that at the close of day.

[4] In illustration of this, Lettsom quotes from Greene's *James IV.*: "But he, injurious man, who lives by crafts, hath taken bribes of me, yet covertly will sell away the thing pertains to me"; and then adds, "This shows how a man may do nothing, or worse than nothing, for a bribe; a feat that seems incomprehensible to the primitive simplicity of the nineteenth century." Lord Bacon, when charged with taking gifts from parties in chancery suits, admitted that he had done so, but alleged that he had decided *against* the givers. Perhaps they thought him open to the charge of "doing nothing for a bribe." But the best comment on the text is in *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, where Spenser describes the condition of one "whom wicked fate hath brought to Court":

Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk:
Such gain the cap of him that makes 'em fine,
Yet keep his book uncross'd:[5] no life to ours.

Gui. Out of your proof you speak: we, poor unfledged,
Have never wing'd from view o' the nest, nor know not
What air's from home. Haply this life is best,
If quiet life be best; sweeter to you
That have a sharper known; well corresponding
With your stiff age: but unto us it is
A cell of ignorance; travelling a-bed;
A prison for a debtor, that not dares
To stride a limit.[6]

Arv. What should we speak of
When we are old as you? when we shall hear
The rain and wind beat dark December, how,
In this our pinching cave, shall we discourse
The freezing hours away? We have seen nothing:
We're beastly; subtle as the fox for prey;
Like warlike as the wolf for what we eat:

Full little knowest thou, that hast not tried,
What hell it is in suing long to bide:
To lose good days, that might be better spent;
To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow;
To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow;
To have thy Prince's grace, yet want her Peers';
To have thy asking, yet wait many years;
To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares;
To eat thy heart through comfortless despairs;
To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
To spend, to give, to want, to be undone.
Unhappy wight, born to disastrous end,
That doth his life in so long tendance spend!

[5] Such men gain the bow of civility from their tailor, but remain still in debt to him, leave their account unsettled. To *cross the book* is still a common phrase for wiping out an entry of debt.—"No life to ours" is no life *compared* to ours.

[6] To *stride a limit* is to overpass his bound.

Our valour is to chase what flies; our cage
We make a quire, as doth the prison'd bird,
And sing our bondage freely.
Bel. How you speak!
Did you but know the city's usuries,[7]
And felt them knowingly! the art o' the Court,
As hard to leave as keep; whose top to climb
Is certain falling, or so slippery that
The fear's as bad as falling; the toil o' the war,
A pain that only seems to seek out danger
I' the name of fame and honour; which dies i' the search;
And hath as oft a slanderous epitaph
As record of fair act; nay, many times
Doth ill deserve[8] by doing well; what's worse,
Must curtsy at the censure. O boys, this story
The world may read in me: my body's mark'd
With Roman swords; and my report was once
First with the best of note: Cymbeline loved me;
And, when a soldier was the theme, my name
Was not far off. Then was I as a tree
Whose boughs did bend with fruit; but, in one night,
A storm or robbery, call it what you will,
Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my leaves,
And left me bare to weather.
Gui. Uncertain favour!
Bel. My fault being nothing, — as I've told you oft, —
But that two villains, whose false oaths prevail'd

[7] *Usuries*, here, seems to mean simply *usages* or *customs*. The Poet has it so again in *Measure for Measure*, iii. 2: "'Twas never merry world since, of two *usuries*, the merriest was put down, and the worser allow'd by order of law a furr'd gown to keep him warm." In this latter case, however, the word is used in a double sense, for *usuries* and *usages* at the same time.

[8] The context requires, apparently, the sense of *receive*. But perhaps *deserve* is meant in the sense of *seeming* to deserve ill, or of *being treated as if* deserving ill. See page 65, note 6.

Before my perfect honour, swore to Cymbeline
I was confederate with the Romans: so,
Follow'd my banishment; and, this twenty years,
This rock and these demesnes have been my world;
Where I have lived at honest freedom; paid
More pious debts to Heaven than in all
The fore-end of my time. But, up to th' mountains!
This is not hunters' language: he that strikes
The venison first shall be the lord o' the feast;
To him the other two shall minister;
And we will fear no poison, which attends
In place of greater state. I'll meet you in the valleys.—
[*Exeunt* GUIDERIUS *and* ARVIRAGUS.
How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature!
These boys know little they are sons to th' King;
Nor Cymbeline dreams that they are alive.
They think they're mine; and, though train'd up thus meanly,
I' the cave wherein they bow their thoughts do hit
The roofs of palaces; and nature prompts them,
In simple and low things, to prince it much
Beyond the trick of others. This Polydore,
The heir of Cymbeline and Britain, whom
The King his father call'd Guiderius,—Jove!
When on my three-foot stool I sit, and tell
The warlike feats I've done, his spirits fly out
Into my story: say, *Thus mine enemy fell,*
And thus I set my foot on's neck; even then
The princely blood flows in his cheek, he sweats,
Strains his young nerves, and puts himself in posture
That acts my words. The younger brother, Cadwal,
Once Arviragus, in as like a figure,
Strikes life into my speech, and shows much more
His own conceiving. Hark, the game is roused!—
O Cymbeline! Heaven and my conscience knows

Thou didst unjustly banish me; whereon,
At three and two years old, I stole these babes;
Thinking to bar thee of succession, as
Thou reft'st me of my lands. Euriphile,
Thou wast their nurse; they took thee for their mother,
And every day do honour to her grave:[9]
Myself, Belarius, that am Morgan call'd,
They take for natural father.—The game is up. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. — *The Same. Near Milford-Haven.*

Enter PISANIO *and* IMOGEN.

Imo. Thou told'st me, when we came from horse, the place
Was near at hand: ne'er long'd my mother so
To see me first, as I do now.[1] Pisanio! man!
Where is Posthúmus? What is in thy mind,
That makes thee stare thus? Wherefore breaks that sigh
From th' inward of thee? One but painted thus
Would be interpreted a thing perplex'd
Beyond self-explication: put thyself
Into a haviour of less fear, ere wildness
Vanquish my staider senses. What's the matter?
Why tender'st thou that paper to me, with
A look untender? If't be summer news,
Smile to't before; if winterly, thou need'st
But keep that countenance still.— My husband's hand!
That drug-damn'd Italy hath out-crafted him,
And he's at some hard point.—Speak, man: thy tongue
May take off some extremity,[2] which to read

[9] Strict grammatical order requires "to *her* grave"; but Shakespeare has many like instances of abrupt change of person. See page 14, note 10.

[1] Meaning, evidently, as I now *long to see Posthumus.*

[2] "Thy speech may take off some of the *extreme sharpness* or *bitterness* of the news contained in the letter.

Would be even mortal to me.

Pis. Please you, read;
And you shall find me, wretched man, a thing
The most disdain'd of fortune.

Imo. [Reads.] *Thy mistress, Pisanio, hath play'd the strumpet to my bed; the testimonies whereof lie bleeding in me. I speak not out of weak surmises; but from proof as strong as my grief, and as certain as I expect my revenge. That part thou, Pisanio, must act for me, if thy faith be not tainted with the breach of hers. Let thine own hands take away her life: I shall give thee opportunity at Milford-Haven: she hath my letter for the purpose: where, if thou fear to strike, and to make me certain it is done, thou art the pander to her dishonour, and equally to me disloyal.*

Pis. What shall I need to draw my sword? the paper
Hath cut her throat already. No, 'tis slander;
Whose edge is sharper than the sword; whose tongue
Outvenoms all the worms [3] of Nile; whose breath
Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie
All corners of the world: kings, queens, and states,[4]
Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave
This viperous slander enters. — What cheer, madam?

Imo. False to his bed! What is it to be false?
To lie in watch there, and to think on him?
To weep 'twixt clock and clock? if sleep charge nature,
To break it with a fearful dream of him,
And cry myself awake? that's false to's bed, is it?

Pis. Alas, good lady!

Imo. I false! Thy conscience witness. — Iachimo,
Thou didst accuse him of incontinency;

[3] *Worm* was the general name for all the *serpent* kind. In *Antony and Cleopatra* the *aspic* is repeatedly spoken of as a *worm*.

[4] *States* here means persons of the highest rank.

Thou then look'dst like a villain; now, methinks,
Thy favour's good enough. — Some jay of Italy,
Whose mother was her painting,[5] hath betray'd him:
Poor I am stale, a garment out of fashion;
And, for I'm richer than to hang by th' walls,
I must be ripp'd.[6] To pieces with me! — O,
Men's vows are women's traitors! All good seeming,
By thy revolt, O husband, shall be thought
Put on for villainy; not born where't grows,
But worn a bait for ladies.

Pis. Good madam, hear me.

Imo. True-honest men being heard, like false Æneas,
Were, in his time, thought false; and Sinon's weeping
Did scandal many a holy tear, took pity
From most true wretchedness: so thou, Posthúmus,
Wilt lay the leaven[7] on all proper men;
Goodly and gallant shall be false and perjured
From thy great fail. — Come, fellow, be thou honest;

[5] That is, who was *born of her paint-box;* who had no beauty, no attraction, no *womanhood* in her face but what was daubed on; insomuch that she might be aptly styled the creature of her painting, one who had daubery for her mother. So, in *King Lear*, ii. 2, Kent says to Oswald, "You cowardly rascal, Nature disclaims in thee: *a tailor made thee.*" And when Cornwall says to him, "Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?" he replies, "Ay, a tailor, sir: a stone-cutter, or *a painter*, could not have made him so ill, though they had been but two hours at the trade." — The meaning of *jay* here is perhaps best explained by the fact that, in Italian, *putta* signifies both the bird so called and a *loose woman.*

[6] Too rich to be hung up as useless among the neglected contents of a wardrobe. Clothes were not formerly, as at present, kept in drawers, or given away as soon as time or change of fashion had impaired their value. On the contrary, they were hung up on wooden pegs, in a room appropriated to the purpose; and, though such as were composed of *rich* substances were occasionally *ripped* for domestic uses, articles of inferior quality were suffered to *hang by the walls* till age and moths had destroyed them.

[7] The *leaven* is, in Scripture phraseology, "the whole wickedness of our sinful nature." See *1 Corinthians*, v. 6, 7, 8. "Thy failure, Posthumus, will lay *falsehood* to the charge of men without guile; make all suspected."

Do thou thy master's bidding: when thou see'st him,
A little witness my obedience. Look!
I draw the sword myself: take it, and hit
The innocent mansion of my love, my heart:
Fear not; 'tis empty of all things but grief:
Thy master is not there; who was, indeed,
The riches of it: do his bidding; strike.
Thou mayst be valiant in a better cause;
But now thou seem'st a coward.
Pis. Hence, vile instrument!
Thou shalt not damn my hand.
Imo. Why, I must die;
And, if I do not by thy hand, thou art
No servant of thy master's: 'gainst self-slaughter
There is a prohibition so divine
That cravens my weak hand. Come, here's my heart:
Something's afore't: soft, soft! we'll no defence;
Obedient as the scabbard.[8]—What is here?
The scriptures of the loyal Leonatus
All turn'd to heresy?[9] Away, away,
Corrupters of my faith! you shall no more
Be stomachers to my heart. Thus may poor fools
Believe false teachers: though those that are betray'd
Do feel the treason sharply, yet the traitor
Stands in worse case of woe.
And thou, Posthúmus, thou that didst set up
My disobedience 'gainst the King my father,
And make me put into contempt the suits

[8] Imogen is wearing her husband's letters in her bosom, as a sort of armour over her heart: so her meaning here is, "Stay, stay a moment! let me remove every thing in the nature of defence." She then takes out the letters, and they suggest to her the reflections that follow.

[9] Referring to her husband's *letters*, but at the same time intending an antithesis between *Scriptural doctrine* and *heresy*.

Of princely fellows,[10] shalt hereafter find
It is no act of common passage, but
A strain of rareness: and I grieve myself
To think, when thou shalt be disedged by her
That now thou tirest on,[11] how thy memory
Will then be pang'd by me. — Pr'ythee, dispatch:
The lamb entreats the butcher: where's thy knife?
Thou art too slow to do thy master's bidding,
When I desire it too.

Pis. O gracious lady,
Since I received command to do this business
I have not slept one wink.

Imo. Do't, and to bed then.

Pis. I'll wake mine eyeballs blind first.

Imo. Wherefore, then,
Didst undertake it? Why hast thou abused
So many miles with a pretence? this place?
Mine action, and thine own? our horses' labour?
The time inviting thee? the perturb'd Court
For my being absent,[12] whereunto I never
Purpose return? Why hast thou gone so far,
To be unbent when thou hast ta'en thy stand,[13]
Th' elected deer before thee?

Pis. But to win time
To lose so bad employment; in the which
I have consider'd of a course. Good lady,

10 *Fellows* for *equals;* those of the same rank with herself.

11 *Disedged* is *satiated,* having the edge of the appetite taken off. — To *tire* is a term in falconry, meaning to *tear,* to *peck fiercely,* to *feed ravenously,* as predaceous birds do. See vol. xv. page 246, note 1.

12 "The Court perturb'd by my being absent," is the proper construction. Shakespeare has many such inversions.

13 Hunters' language. To be *unbent* is to *have the bow unprepared* for shooting. — The meaning of *stand,* here, is the same as explained before. See page 48, note 8, and the reference there.

Hear me with patience.
Imo. Talk thy tongue weary; speak:
I've heard I am a strumpet; and mine ear,
Therein false struck, can take no greater wound,
Nor tent[14] to bottom that. But speak.
Pis. Then, madam,
I thought you would not back again.
Imo. Most like,
Bringing me here to kill me.
Pis. Not so, neither:
But, if I were as wise as honest, then
My purpose would prove well. It cannot be
But that my master is abused:
Some villain, ay, and singular in his art,
Hath done you both this cursèd injury.
Imo. Some Roman courtezan.
Pis. No, on my life.
I'll give but notice you are dead, and send him
Some bloody sign of it; for 'tis commanded
I should do so: you shall be miss'd at Court,
And that will well confirm it.
Imo. Why, good fellow,
What shall I do the while? where bide? how live?
Or in my life what comfort, when I am
Dead to my husband?
Pis. If you'll back to th' Court, —
Imo. No Court, no father; nor no more ado
With that harsh, noble, simple nothing, Cloten;
That Cloten, whose love-suit hath been to me
As fearful as a siege.
Pis. If not at Court,
Then not in Britain must you bide.

[14] The language of surgery. To *tent* is to *probe*.

Imo. What then?
Hath Britain all the Sun that shines? Day, night,
Are they not but in Britain? I' the world's volume,
Our Britain seems as in it, but not of 't;
In a great pool a swan's nest: pr'ythee, think
There's livers out of Britain.
Pis. I'm most glad
You think of other place. Th' ambassador,
Lucius the Roman, comes to Milford-Haven
To-morrow: now, if you could wear a mind
Dark as your fortune is,[15] and but disguise
That which, t' appear itself, must yet not be
But by self-danger, you should tread a course
Pretty and full of view;[16] yea, haply, near
The residence of Posthumus; so nigh at least
That though his actions were not visible, yet
Report should render him hourly to your ear
As truly as he moves.
Imo. O, for such means!
Though peril to my modesty, not death on't,
I would adventure.

15 "To wear a *dark mind*," says Johnson, "is to carry a mind impenetrable to the search of others. *Darkness*, applied to the *mind*, is *secrecy;* applied to the *fortune*, is *obscurity*." Pisanio's meaning probably is, to have Imogen carry out the disguise of her person by assuming a strange *mental* as well as *personal* attire. — *Appear*, in the next clause, is probably used as a transitive verb, and in the sense of to *show*, to *evince*, or to *make apparent*. The Poet has it repeatedly so. See vol. xvi. page 268, note 1.

16 *Pretty* must here be taken in the sense of apt or suitable to the purpose; as when Lady Capulet says of Juliet, "My daughter's of a *pretty* age"; meaning an age *suitable* for marriage. — *Should* is an instance of the indiscriminate use, which I have often noted, of *could*, *should*, and *would*. Here *would* is required by our present idiom. — So that the meaning of the whole appears to be, "The course proposed would be apt for your purpose, and you would have a full view of what is going on, without being yourself known."

Pis. Well, then, here's the point:
You must forget to be a woman; change
Command into obedience; fear and niceness —
The handmaids of all women, or, more truly,
Woman its pretty self — into a waggish courage;
Ready in gibes, quick-answer'd, saucy, and
As quarrelous as the weasel; [17] nay, you must
Forget that rarest treasure of your cheek,
Exposing it — but, O, the harder heart!
Alack, no remedy! — to the greedy touch
Of common-kissing Titan; [18] and forget
Your laboursome and dainty trims, wherein
You made great Juno angry.[19]
Imo. Nay, be brief:
I see into thy end, and am almost
A man already.
Pis. First, make yourself but like one.
Fore-thinking this, I have already fit [20] —

[17] Weasels, it appears, were formerly kept in houses, instead of cats, for the purpose of destroying vermin. Shakespeare was doubtless well acquainted with their disposition.

[18] So in Sidney's *Arcadia*: "And beautiful might have been, if they had not suffered greedy Phœbus over often and hard to kisse them." — In "O, the harder heart!" Pisanio apprehends that Imogen, in the part she is going to act, will feel the need of a man's harder, or *tougher*, heart.

[19] It seems as if the Poet meant to gather up the whole train of womanly graces and accomplishments in this peerless heroine: so he here represents her as a perfect mistress in the art of dressing, — so much so as to provoke the jealousy of Juno herself. And he appears to have deemed it not the least of a lady's duties to make herself just as beautiful and attractive as she could by beauty and tastefulness of dress; this being one of her ways of delighting those about her.

[20] *Fit* for *fitted.* The Poet several times has the preterit of that verb so formed. Thus in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, 1: "That part was aptly *fit*, and naturally perform'd." And in v. 5, of this play · "When she had *fit* you with her craft." Also in Jonson's *Staple of News*, i. 2: "What, are those desks *fit* yet?"

'Tis in my cloak-bag—doublet, hat, hose, all
That answer to them: would you, in their serving,
And with what imitation you can borrow
From youth of such a season, 'fore noble Lucius
Present yourself, desire his service, tell him
Wherein you're happy,—which you'll make him know,
If that his head have ear in music,—doubtless
With joy he will embrace you; for he's honourable,
And, doubling that, most holy.[21] Your means abroad,
You have me,[22] rich; and I will never fail
Beginning nor supplyment.

Imo. Thou'rt all the comfort
The gods will diet me with. Pr'ythee, away:
There's more to be consider'd; but we'll even
All that good time will give us:[23] this attempt
I'm soldier to, and will abide it with
A prince's courage. Away, I pr'ythee.

Pis. Well, madam, we must take a short farewell,
Lest, being miss'd, I be suspected of
Your carriage from the Court. My noble mistress,
Here is a box; I had it from the Queen:
What's in't is precious; if you're sick at sea,
Or stomach-qualm'd at land, a dram of this
Will drive away distemper. To some shade,
And fit you to your manhood: may the gods
Direct you to the best!

Imo. Amen: I thank thee. [*Exeunt.*

[21] The Poet repeatedly uses *holy* in the sense of *upright* or *just*. See vol. vii. page 95, note 11.

[22] As for your subsistence abroad, you may rely on me.

[23] To *even* is to *equal*, to *make even*, or to *adjust:* Johnson explains it here, "we'll make our work even with our time, we'll do what time will allow."

SCENE V. — *The Same. A Room in* CYMBELINE'S *Palace.*

Enter CYMBELINE, *the* Queen, CLOTEN, LUCIUS, *and* Lords.

Cym. Thus far; and so, farewell.
Luc. Thanks, royal sir.
My Emperor hath wrote: I must from hence;
And am right sorry that I must report ye
My master's enemy.
Cym. Our subjects, sir,
Will not endure his yoke; and for ourself
To show less sovereignty than they, must needs
Appear unkinglike.
Luc. So, sir, I desire of you
A conduct[1] overland to Milford-Haven.
All joy befall your Grace! — and, madam, you!
Cym. My lords, you are appointed for that office;
The due of honour in no point omit. —
So, farewell, noble Lucius.
Luc. Your hand, my lord.
Clo. Receive it friendly; but from this time forth
I wear it as your enemy.
Luc. Sir, th' event
Is yet to name the winner: fare you well.
Cym. Leave not the worthy Lucius, good my lords,
Till he have cross'd the Severn. — Happiness!
[*Exeunt* LUCIUS *and* Lords.
Queen. He goes hence frowning: but it honours us
That we have given him cause.
Clo. 'Tis all the better;
Your valiant Britons have their wishes in it.
Cym. Lucius hath wrote already to the Emperor

[1] *Conduct* for *conductor*, *guide*, or *escort*. Often so.

How it goes here. It fits us therefore ripely
Our chariots and our horsemen be in readiness:
The powers that he already hath in Gallia
Will soon be drawn to head, from whence he moves
His war for Britain.

Queen. 'Tis not sleepy business;
But must be look'd to speedily and strongly.

Cym. Our expectation that it would be thus
Hath made us forward. But, my gentle Queen,
Where is our daughter? She hath not appear'd
Before the Roman, nor to us hath tender'd
The duty of the day. She looks us like [2]
A thing more made of malice than of duty:
We've noted it. — Call her before us; for
We've been too slight in sufferance. [*Exit an* Attendant.

Queen. Royal sir,
Since th' exile of Posthúmus, most retired
Hath her life been; the cure whereof, my lord,
'Tis time must do. Beseech your Majesty,
Forbear sharp speeches to her: she's a lady
So tender of rebukes, that words are strokes,
And strŏkes death to her.

Re-enter Attendant.

Cym. Where is she, sir? How
Can her contempt be answer'd?

Atten. Please you, sir,
Her chambers are all lock'd; and there's no answer
That will be given to th' loudest noise we make.

Queen. My lord, when last I went to visit her,

2 "*Looks us* like" appears to be an equivalent for *seems to us* like. To *look* is often used thus by the old writers, with an ellipsis of the word which present usage requires after it. See vol. xvi. page 94, note 7. Also, vol. xii. page 105, note 5.

She pray'd me to excuse her keeping close;
Whereto constrain'd by her infirmity,
She should that duty leave unpaid to you
Which daily she was bound to proffer: this
She wish'd me to make known; but our great Court
Made me to blame in memory.

Cym. Her doors lock'd?
Not seen of late? Grant, Heavens, that which I fear
Prove false! [*Exit.*

Queen. Son, — son, I say, follow the King.

Clo. That man of hers, Pisanio, her old servant,
I have not seen these two days.

Queen. Go, look after. —
[*Exit* CLOTEN.
Pisanio, thou that stand'st so for Posthúmus! —
He hath a drug of mine; I pray his absence
Proceed by swallowing that; for he believes
It is a thing most precious. But, for her,
Where is she gone? Haply, despair hath seized her;
Or, wing'd with fervour of her love, she's flown
To her desired Posthúmus: gone she is
To death or to dishonour; and my end
Can make good use of either: she being down,
I have the placing of the British crown. —

Re-enter CLOTEN.

How now, my son!

Clo. 'Tis certain she is fled.
Go in and cheer the King: he rages; none
Dare come about him.

Queen. [*Aside.*] All the better: may
This night forestall him of the coming day! [3] [*Exit.*

Clo. I love and hate her; for she's fair and royal,

[3] May his grief this night *prevent* him from ever seeing another day.

And that she hath all courtly parts more exquisite
Than lady, ladies, woman:[4] from every one
The best she hath, and she, of all compounded,
Outsells them all; I love her therefore: but,
Disdaining me, and throwing favours on
The low Posthúmus, slanders so her judgment,
That what's else rare is choked; and in that point
I will conclude to hate her, nay, indeed,
To be revenged upon her. For, when fools
Shall —

Enter PISANIO.

Who is here? What, are you packing, sirrah?
Come hither: ah, you precious pander! Villain,
Where is thy lady? In a word; or else
Thou'rt straightway with the fiends.

Pis. O, good my lord!—

Clo. Where is thy lady? or, by Jupiter,—
I will not ask again. Close[5] villain, I
Will have this secret from thy heart, or rip
Thy heart to find it. Is she with Posthúmus?
From whose so many weights of baseness cannot
A dram of worth be drawn.

Pis. Alas, my lord,
How can she be with him? When was she miss'd?
He is in Rome.

Clo. Where is she, sir? Come nearer;[6]
No further halting: satisfy me home[7]
What is become of her.

Pis. O, my all-worthy lord!—

[4] Than any *lady*, than all *ladies*, than all *womankind*. There is a similar passage in *All's Well*, ii. 3: "To any count; to all counts; to what is man."

[5] *Close*, here, is *sly*, *reticent*, *secretive*. Often so.

[6] He means, "Come nearer *to the point*." Speak more to the purpose.

[7] "Satisfy me *thoroughly*," or *to the utmost*. *Home* was often used so.

Clo. All-worthy villain!
Discover where thy mistress is at once,
At the next word; no more of *worthy lord:*
Speak, or thy silence on the instant is
Thy condemnation and thy death.

Pis. Then, sir,
This paper is the history of my knowledge
Touching her flight. [*Presenting a letter.*

Clo. Let's see't. I will pursue her
Even to Augustus' throne.

Pis. [*Aside.*] Or this, or perish.[8]
She's far enough; and what he learns by this
May prove his travel, not her danger.

Clo. Hum!

Pis. [*Aside.*] I'll write to my lord she's dead.—O Imogen,
Safe mayst thou wander, safe return again!

Clo. Sirrah, is this letter true?

Pis. Sir, as I think.

Clo. It is Posthumus' hand; I know't. Sirrah, if thou wouldst not be a villain, but do me true service, undergo those employments wherein I should have cause to use thee with a serious industry,—that is, what villainy soe'er I bid thee do, to perform it directly and truly,—I would think thee an honest man: thou shouldst neither want my means for thy relief, nor my voice for thy preferment.

Pis. Well, my good lord.

Clo. Wilt thou serve me?—for since patiently and constantly thou hast stuck to the bare fortune of that beggar Posthumus, thou canst not, in the course of gratitude, but be a diligent follower of mine,—wilt thou serve me?

Pis. Sir, I will.

[8] Meaning, probably, "I must either *practise this deceit* upon Cloten or perish by his fury."

Clo. Give me thy hand; here's my purse. Hast any of thy late master's garments in thy possession?

Pis. I have, my lord, at my lodging, the same suit he wore when he took leave of my lady and mistress.

Clo. The first service thou dost me, fetch that suit hither: let it be thy first service; go.

Pis. I shall, my lord. [*Exit.*

Clo. Meet thee at Milford-Haven! — I forgot to ask him one thing; I'll remember't anon: — even there, thou villain Posthumus, will I kill thee. — I would these garments were come. She said upon a time — the bitterness of it I now belch from my heart — that she held the very garment of Posthumus in more respect than my noble and natural person, together with the adornment of my qualities. With that suit upon my back, will I ravish her: first kill him, and in her eyes; there shall she see my valour, which will then be a torment to her contempt. He on the ground, my speech of insultment ended on his dead body, and when my lust hath dined, — which, as I say, to vex her I will execute in the clothes that she so praised, — to the Court I'll knock her back, foot her home again. She hath despised me rejoicingly, and I'll be merry in my revenge. —

Re-enter PISANIO, *with the clothes.*

Be those the garments?

Pis. Ay, my noble lord.

Clo. How long is't since she went to Milford-Haven?

Pis. She can scarce be there yet.

Clo. Bring this apparel to my chamber; that is the second thing that I have commanded thee: the third is, that thou wilt be a voluntary mute to my design. Be but duteous and true, preferment shall tender itself to thee. My revenge is now at Milford: would I had wings to follow it! Come, and be true. [*Exit.*

Pis. Thou bidd'st me to thy loss: for, true to thee
Were to prove false, which I will never be,
To him that is most true. To Milford go,
And find not her whom thou pursuest. — Flow, flow,
You heavenly blessings, on her! This fool's speed
Be cross'd with slowness; labour be his meed! [*Exit.*

SCENE VI. — *The Same. Wales: before the Cave of* BELARIUS.

Enter IMOGEN, *in boy's clothes.*

Imo. I see a man's life is a tedious one:
I've tired myself; and for two nights together
Have made the ground my bed. I should be sick,
But that my resolution helps me. — Milford,
When from the mountain-top Pisanio show'd thee,
Thou wast within a ken: O Jove! I think
Foundations [1] fly the wretched; such, I mean,
Where they should be relieved. Two beggars told me
I could not miss my way: will poor folks lie,
That have afflictions on them, knowing 'tis
A punishment or trial? Yes; no wonder,
When rich ones scarce tell true: to lapse in fulness
Is sorer [2] than to lie for need; and falsehood
Is worse in kings than beggars. — My dear lord!
Thou'rt one o' the false ones: now I think on thee
My hunger's gone; but even, before, I was
At point to sink for food. —But what is this?
Here is a path to't; 'tis some savage hold:

[1] *Foundations* were religious houses devoted to charity and hospitality; institutions *founded* for the relief of suffering and the entertainment of strangers. In the olden time, before the trade of tavern-keeping was known, the providing of such houses was esteemed a high work of Christian piety.

[2] *Sorer* is *worse*, more criminal.

I were best not call; I dare not call: yet famine,
Ere clean it o'erthrow nature, makes it valiant.
Plenty and peace breeds cowards; hardness ever
Of hardiness is mother. — Ho! who's here?
If any thing that's civil,[3] speak; if savage,
Take or lend. Ho! No answer? then I'll enter.
Best draw my sword: an if mine enemy
But fear the sword like me, he'll scarcely look on't.
Such a foe, good Heavens! [*Goes into the cave.*

Enter BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, *and* ARVIRAGUS.

Bel. You, Polydore, have proved best woodman,[4] and
Are master of the feast: Cadwal and I
Will play the cook and servant; 'tis our match:[5]
The sweat of industry would dry and die,
But for the end it works to. Come; our stomachs[6]
Will make what's homely savoury: weariness
Can snore upon the flint, when resty[7] sloth
Finds the down-pillow hard. — Now, peace be here,
Poor house, that keep'st thyself!

Gui. I'm throughly[8] weary.

Arv. I'm weak with toil, yet strong in appetite.

[3] *Civil*, here, is *civilized*, as opposed to *savage*. So, in *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3, we have "*civil* laws are cruel"; where "*civil* laws" means the laws of *civilized* life. — In the next clause the meaning seems to be, "either let me have food, and *take* pay for it, or else *lend* it to me, and look for a future return." So she says, afterwards, "I thought to have *begg'd* or *bought* what I have took."

[4] *Woodman* was a term in common use for a *hunter*.

[5] *Match* is the *bargain* or *compact* announced in a previous scene.

[6] *Stomach* was very often used for *appetite;* and we all know that hunger is the best sauce.

[7] *Resty* signifies here *dull, heavy*, as it is explained in Bullokar's *Expositor*, 1616. So Milton uses it in his *Eiconoclastes*, sec. 24: "The master is too *resty*, or too rich, to say his own prayers, or to bless his own table."

[8] *Throughly* and *thoroughly* were used each for the other; being, in fact, but different forms of the same word. See vol. xii. page 268, note 13.

Gui. There is cold meat i' the cave; we'll browse on that,
Whilst [9] what we've kill'd be cook'd.

Bel. Stay; come not in.
[*Looking into the cave.*
But that it eats our victuals, I should think
Here were a fairy.

Gui. What's the matter, sir?

Bel. By Jupiter, an angel! or, if not,
An earthly paragon! Behold divineness
No elder than a boy!

Re-enter IMOGEN.

Imo. Good masters, harm me not:
Before I enter'd here, I call'd; and thought
T' have begg'd or bought what I have took: good troth,
I've stolen nought; nor would not, though I had found
Gold strew'd i' the floor.[10] Here's money for my meat:
I would have left it on the board so soon
As I had made my meal, and parted so,[11]
With prayers for the provider.

Gui. Money, youth?

Arv. All gold and silver rather turn to dirt!
And 'tis no better reckon'd, but of those
Who worship dirty gods.

Imo. I see you're angry:
Know, if you kill me for my fault, I should
Have died had I not made it.

Bel. Whither bound?

Imo. To Milford-Haven.

Bel. What's your name?

[9] *Whilst* for *till.* Repeatedly so. See vol. xvii. page 58, note 5.

[10] This use of *in* where we should use *on* was common. So in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy will be done *in* Earth as it is in Heaven."

[11] *Parted* for *departed;* a frequent usage. See vol. x. page 226, note 16.

Imo. Fidele, sir. I have a kinsman who
Is bound for Italy; he embark'd at Milford;
To whom being going, almost spent with hunger,
I'm fall'n in [12] this offence.

Bel. Pr'ythee, fair youth,
Think us no churls, nor measure our good minds
By this rude place we live in. Well encounter'd!
'Tis almost night: you shall have better cheer
Ere you depart; and thanks to stay and eat it. —
Boys, bid him welcome.

Gui. Were you a woman, youth,
I should woo hard but be your groom: in honesty,
I bid for you as I do buy.[13]

Arv. I'll make't my comfort
He is a man; I'll love him as my brother; —
And such a welcome as I'd give to him
After long absence, such is yours: most welcome!
Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends.

Imo. 'Mongst friends,
If brothers. — [*Aside.*] Would it had been so, that they
Had been my father's sons! then had my prize [14]
Been less; and so more equal ballasting
To thee, Posthúmus.

Bel. He wrings [15] at some distress.

Gui. Would I could free't!

[12] The indiscriminate use of *in* and *into* has been repeatedly noted.

[13] Something obscure, perhaps; but the meaning seems to be, "I am speaking sincerely and in good faith, and not by way of compliment or pastime; my heart is in my words; and, as when making an honest purchase, I mean as I say, and will pay what I offer." This explanation is, in substance, Mr. Joseph Crosby's.

[14] Here, again, I give Mr. Crosby's explanation: "The metaphor is from a prize taken at sea: 'The prize thou hast mastered in me would have been less, and not have sunk thee, as I have done, by overloading.'"

[15] To *wring* and to *writhe* have the same radical meaning.

Arv. Or I; whate'er it be,
What pain it cost, what danger! Gods!
Bel. Hark, boys.
[*Whispering.*
Imo. [*Aside.*] Great men,
That had a court no bigger than this cave,
That did attend themselves, and had the virtue
Which their own conscience seal'd them, — laying by
That nothing-gift of differing [16] multitudes, —
Could not out-peer these twain. — Pardon me, gods!
I'd change my sex to be companion with them,
Since Leonate is false.
Bel. It shall be so.
Boys, we'll go dress our hunt. — Fair youth, come in:
Discourse is heavy, fasting; when we've supp'd,
We'll mannerly demand thee of thy story,
So far as thou wilt speak it.
Gui. Pray, draw near.
Arv. The night to th' owl, the morn to th' lark, less welcome.
Imo. Thanks, sir.
Arv. I pray, draw near. [*Exeunt.*

[16] Several explanations have been given of *different* in this place, such as *wavering* and *many-headed.* Imogen is contrasting the nobility of conscious virtue with the state of those who feed on the "bubble reputation" blown up by multitudes differing in mind and purpose, and therefore *fickle*, or, as we say, *unreliable.* And so Heath explains it: "The *nothing-gift* which the multitude are supposed to bestow is glory, reputation, which is a present of little value from their hands, as they are neither unanimous in giving it nor constant in continuing it."

SCENE VII.—*Rome. A public Place.*

Enter two Senators *and* Tribunes.

1 Sen. This is the tenour of the Emperor's writ:
That since the common men are now in action
'Gainst the Pannonians and Dalmatians;
And that the legions now in Gallia are
Full weak to undertake our wars against
The fall'n-off Britons; that we do incite
The gentry to this business. He creates
Lucius pro-consul; and to you the tribunes,
For this immediate levy, he commends[17]
His absolute commission. Long live Cæsar!

1 Tri. Is Lucius general of the forces?

2 Sen. Ay.

1 Tri. Remaining now in Gallia?

1 Sen. With those legions
Which I have spoke of, whereunto your levy
Must be supplyant: the words of your commission
Will tie you to the numbers, and the time
Of their dispatch.

1 Tri. We will discharge our duty. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Britain. Wales: the Forest near the Cave of* BELARIUS.

Enter CLOTEN.

Clo. I am near to the place where they should meet, if Pisanio have mapp'd it truly. How fit his garments serve

[17] *Commends* in the sense of *commits*. See vol. vii. page 183, note 16.

me! Why should his mistress, who was made by Him that made the tailor, not be fit too? the rather — saving reverence of the word — for 'tis said a woman's fitness comes by fits. Therein I must play the workman. I dare speak it to myself, — for it is not vain-glory for a man and his glass to confer; in his own chamber, I mean, — the lines of my body are as well drawn as his; no less young, more strong, not beneath him in fortunes, beyond him in the advantage of the time, above him in birth, alike conversant in general services, and more remarkable in single oppositions:[1] yet this imperceiverant[2] thing loves him in my despite. What mortality is! — Posthumus, thy head, which now is growing upon thy shoulders, shall within this hour be off; thy mistress enforced; thy garments cut to pieces before her face: and, all this done, spurn her home to her father; who may happily be a little angry for my so rough usage; but my mother, having power of his testiness, shall turn all into my commendations. My horse is tied up safe: out, sword, and to a sore purpose! Fortune, put them into my hand! This is the very description of their meeting-place; and the fellow dares not deceive me. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. — *The Same. Before the Cave of* BELARIUS.

Enter, from the cave, BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, *and* IMOGEN.

Bel. [*To* IMOGEN.] You are not well: remain here in the cave;

[1] In single *combat*. An *opposite*, in Shakespeare's age, was the common phrase for an *antagonist*. See vol. v. page 208, note 17.

[2] *Imperceiverant* is *undiscerning* or *unperceiving*. The word, though now obsolete, was often used in the Poet's time. Dyce quotes the following apposite passage from *The Widow*, a play written by Jonson, Fletcher, and Middleton: "Methinks the words themselves should make him do't, had he but the *perseverance* of a Cock sparrow."

We'll come to you after hunting.
Arv. [*To* IMOGEN.] Brother, stay here:
Are we not brothers?
Imo. So man and man should be;
But clay and clay differs in dignity,
Whose dust is both alike. I'm very sick.
Gui. Go you to hunting; I'll abide with him.
Imo. So sick I am not, — yet I am not well;
But not so citizen a wanton[3] as
To seem to die ere sick: so please you, leave me;
Stick to your journal course: the breach of custom
Is breach of all.[4] I'm ill; but your being by me
Cannot amend me; society is no comfort
To one not sociable: I'm not very sick,
Since I can reason of it. Pray you, trust me here:
I'll rob none but myself; and let me die,
Stealing so poorly.
Gui. I love thee; I have spoke it:
As much the quantity, the weight as much,
As I do love my father.
Bel. What? how! how!
Arv. If it be sin to say so, sir, I yoke me
In my good brother's fault. I know not why
I love this youth; and I have heard you say,
Love's reason's without reason: the bier at door,
And a demand who is't shall die, I'd say,
My father, not this youth.

[3] "So citizen a wanton" means, apparently, so delicate or effeminate a resident of the city. *Citizen* was sometimes used as an adjective, meaning *town-bred;* but I suspect this is an instance of transposition, and that *wanton* is to be taken as the adjective, — "so wanton a citizen," or "a citizen so wanton." The Poet has many like transpositions.

[4] Keep your *daily* course uninterrupted; if the stated plan of life is once broken, nothing follows but confusion. The Poet elsewhere has *journal* in the literal sense of *daily.*

Bel. [*Aside.*] O noble strain![5]
O worthiness of nature! breed of greatness!
Cowards father cowards, and base things sire base:
Nature hath meal and bran, contempt and grace.
I'm not their father; yet who this should be,
Doth miracle itself, loved before me. —
'Tis the ninth hour o' the morn.

Arv. Brother, farewell.

Imo. I wish ye sport.

Arv. You health. — [*To* BELA.] So please you, sir.

Imo. [*Aside.*] These are kind creatures. Gods, what lies I've heard!
Our courtiers say all's savage but at Court:
Experience, O, thou disprovest report!
Th' imperious[6] seas breed monsters; for the dish
Poor tributary rivers as sweet fish.
I am sick still; heart-sick: — Pisanio,
I'll now taste of thy drug. [*Swallows some.*

Gui. I could not stir him:
He said he was gentle,[7] but unfortunate;
Dishonestly afflicted, but yet honest.

Arv. Thus did he answer me: yet said, hereafter
I might know more.

Bel. To th' field, to th' field! —
We'll leave you for this time: go in and rest.

Arv. We'll not be long away.

Bel. Pray, be not sick,
For you must be our housewife.

[5] *Strain*, here, is *stock*, *race*, or *lineage*. See vol. xiv. page 109, note 11.

[6] *Imperious* for *imperial*, the two being used indiscriminately. Imogen is metaphorically comparing the big-bugs, who haunt the imperial seat, with the humble dwellers in the wood.

[7] *Gentle* here means of *gentle stock* or *birth*. "I could not *stir* him" means "I could not *induce* him *to tell his story*"; or to give an account of himself.

Imo. Well or ill,
I'm bound to you, and shall be ever.
[*Exit* IMOGEN *into the cave.*

Bel. This youth, howe'er distress'd, appears[8] he hath had
Good ancestors.

Arv. How angel-like he sings!

Gui. But his neat cookery! he cut our roots
In characters; and sauced our broths,
As Juno had been sick, and he her dieter.

Arv. Nobly he yokes a smiling with a sigh, as if
The sigh was that it was for not being such
A smile; the smile mocking the sigh, that it
Would fly from so divine a temple, to commix
With winds that sailors rail at.

Gui. I do note
That grief and patience, rooted in him both,
Mingle their spurs[9] together.

Arv. Grow, patience!
And let the stinking elder, grief, untwine
His perishing root with the increasing vine![10]

Bel. It is great morning.[11] Come, away! Who's there?

[8] Here, again, *appears* is a transitive verb, meaning *shows*, *evinces*, or *makes apparent*. See page 78, note 15.

[9] *Spurs* are the longest and largest leading roots of trees. We have the word again in *The Tempest:* "The strong-based promontory have I made shake, and by the *spurs* pluck'd up the pine and cedar."

[10] We have here an expression of precisely the same sort as one now, against propriety, growing into use; namely, "differing *with* another," instead of "differing *from* another." In our time, the proper language would be, "Let the elder *twine* his root *with* the vine"; or, "Let the elder *untwine* his root *from* the vine"; just as it is proper to say "I *agree with* you"; or, "I *differ from* you."—To *perish* was sometimes used as a transitive verb. So, here, *perishing* means *destructive*. "The stinking elder" is the same as the poison elder; and I used to hear it called, and to call it, by either name indifferently. See vol. viii. page 195, note 5.

[11] *Great morning* is, apparently, *broad day;* like the French, *Il est grand matin.* The same phrase occurs again in *Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 3.

Enter CLOTEN.

Clo. I cannot find those runagates; that villain
Hath mock'd me. I am faint.

Bel. *Those runagates!*
Means he not us? I partly know him; 'tis
Cloten, the son o' the Queen. I fear some ambush.
I saw him not these many years, and yet
I know 'tis he. We're held as outlaws: hence!

Gui. He is but one: you and my brother search
What companies [12] are near: pray you, away;
Let me alone with him. [*Exeunt* BELARIUS *and* ARVIRAGUS.

Clo. Soft! What are you
That fly me thus? some villain mountaineers?
I've heard of such. — What slave art thou?

Gui. A thing
More slavish did I ne'er than answering
A slave without a knock.

Clo. Thou art a robber,
A law-breaker, a villain: yield thee, thief.

Gui. To who? to thee? What art thou? Have not I
An arm as big as thine? a heart as big?
Thy words, I grant, are bigger; for I wear not
My dagger in my mouth. Say what thou art,
Why I should yield to thee?

Clo. Thou villain base,
Know'st me not by my clothes?

Gui. No, nor thy tailor, rascal,
Who is thy grandfather: he made those clothes,
Which, as it seems, make thee.[13]

Clo. Thou precious varlet,
My tailor made them not.

[12] *Companies* for *companions*. Repeatedly so. See vol. xii. page 9, note 8.
[13] This is very like "whose *mother was her painting*." See page 74, note 5.

Gui. Hence, then, and thank
The man that gave them thee. Thou art some fool;
I'm loth to beat thee.
Clo. Thou injurious thief,
Hear but my name, and tremble.
Gui. What's thy name?
Clo. Cloten, thou villain.
Gui. Cloten, thou double villain, be thy name,
I cannot tremble at it: were it Toad, or Adder, Spider,
'Twould move me sooner.
Clo. To thy further fear,
Nay, to thy mere confusion, thou shalt know
I'm son to th' Queen.
Gui. I'm sorry for't; not seeming
So worthy as thy birth.
Clo. Art not afeard?
Gui. Those that I reverence, those I fear, the wise;
At fools I laugh, not fear them.
Clo. Die the death:
When I have slain thee with my proper hand,
I'll follow those that even now fled hence,
And on the gates of Lud's-town set your heads.
Yield, rustic mountaineer. [*Exeunt, fighting.*

Re-enter BELARIUS *and* ARVIRAGUS.

Bel. No company's abroad.
Arv. None in the world: you did mistake him, sure.
Bel. I cannot tell: long is it since I saw him,
But time hath nothing blurr'd those lines of favour
Which then he wore; the snatches in his voice,
And burst of speaking, were as his: I'm absolute
'Twas very Cloten.
Arv. In this place we left them:
I wish my brother make good time with him,

You say he is so fell.
Bel. Being scarce made up,
I mean, to man, he had not apprehension
Of roaring terrors; for the act of judgment
Is oft the cause of fear.[14] But, see, thy brother.

Re-enter GUIDERIUS *with* CLOTEN'S *head.*

Gui. This Cloten was a fool, an empty purse;
There was no money in't: not Hercules
Could have knock'd out his brains, for he had none:
Yet, I not doing this, the fool had borne
My head as I do his.
Bel. What hast thou done?
Gui. I'm perfect[15] what: cut off one Cloten's head,
Son to the Queen, after his own report;
Who call'd me traitor, mountaineer; and swore
With his own single hand he'd take us in,[16]
Displace our heads where — thank the gods! — they grow,
And set them on Lud's-town.
Bel. We're all undone.
Gui. Why, worthy father, what have we to lose
But that he swore to take, our lives? The law
Protects not us: then why should we be tender
To let an arrogant piece of flesh threat us,
Play judge and executioner all himself,
For we do fear the law? What company
Discover you abroad?

[14] *Act*, again, for *action* or *operation*. See page 28, note 2. Also, vol. xiv. page 162, note 41. The meaning of the passage clearly is, that Cloten, before he grew to manhood, was too thick-skulled to be sensible of the *loudest*, that is, the most evident, or most threatening, dangers. But a foolhardy boldness, springing from sheer dulness or paralysis of judgment, is no uncommon thing. See vol. xvi. page 106, note 27.

[15] "I know perfectly what I have done." Belarius uses *absolute* just so a little before. See page 63, note 7.

[16] *Take-in*, again, for *conquer* or *subdue*. See page 64, note 2.

Bel. No single soul
Can we set eye on; but in all safe reason
He must have some attendants. Though his humour
Was nothing but mutation, ay, and that
From one bad thing to worse; not frenzy, not
Absolute madness could so far have raved,
To bring him here alone: although, perhaps,
It may be heard at Court, that such as we
Cave here, hunt here, are outlaws, and in time
May make some stronger head; the which he hearing —
As it is like him — might break out, and swear
He'd fetch us in; yet is't not probable
To come alone, either he so undertaking,
Or they so suffering: then on good ground we fear,
If we do fear this body hath a tail,
More perilous than the head.

Arv. Let ordinance
Come as the gods foresay it: howsoe'er,
My brother hath done well.

Bel. I had no mind
To hunt this day: the boy Fidele's sickness
Did make my way long forth.[17]

Gui. With his own sword,
Which he did wave against my throat, I've ta'en
His head from him: I'll throw't into the creek
Behind our rock; and let it to the sea,
And tell the fishes he's the Queen's son, Cloten:
That's all I reck. [*Exit.*

Bel. I fear 'twill be revenged:
Would, Polydore, thou hadst not done't! though valour
Becomes thee well enough.

Arv. Would I had done't,

[17] Made my *walk forth* from the cave *tedious.*

So the revenge alone pursued me!—Polydore,
I love thee brotherly; but envy much
Thou hast robb'd me of this deed. I would revenges,
That possible strength might meet,[18] would seek us through,
And put us to our answer.

Bel. Well, 'tis done:
We'll hunt no more to-day, nor seek for danger
Where there's no profit. I pr'ythee, to our rock;
You and Fidele play the cooks: I'll stay
Till hasty Polydore return, and bring him
To dinner presently.

Arv. Poor sick Fidele!
I'll willingly to him: to gain his colour
I'd let a parish of such Clotens blood,[19]
And praise myself for charity. [*Exit.*

Bel. O thou goddess,
Thou divine Nature, how thyself thou blazon'st
In these two princely boys! They are as gentle
As zephyrs, blowing below the violet,
Not wagging his sweet head; and yet as rough,
Their royal blood enchafed, as the rudest wind,
That by the top doth take the mountain pine,
And make him stoop to th' vale. 'Tis wonderful
That an invisible instinct should frame them
To royalty unlearn'd; honour untaught;
Civility not seen from other; valour,
That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop
As if it had been sow'd. Yet still it's strange
What Cloten's being here to us portends,
Or what his death will bring us.

[18] Such pursuit of vengeance as fell within the possibility of resistance.

[19] To restore the colour into his cheeks, I would let out the blood of *a whole parish* of such fellows as Cloten. A *parish* was a common phrase for a *great number*.

Re-enter GUIDERIUS.

Gui. Where's my brother?
I have sent Cloten's clotpoll down the stream,
In embassy to his mother: his body's hostage
For his return. [*Solemn music.*
Bel. My ingenious instrument!
Hark, Polydore, it sounds! But what occasion
Hath Cadwal now to give it motion? Hark!
Gui. Is he at home?
Bel. He went hence even now.
Gui. What does he mean? since death of my dear'st mother
It did not speak before. All solemn things
Should answer solemn accidents. The matter?
Triumphs for nothing, and lamenting toys,[20]
Is jollity for apes, and grief for boys.
Is Cadwal mad?
Bel. Look, here he comes,
And brings the dire occasion in his arms
Of what we blame him for!

Re-enter ARVIRAGUS, *bearing* IMOGEN, *as dead, in his arms.*

Arv. The bird is dead
That we have made so much on. I had rather
Have skipp'd from sixteen years of age to sixty,
T' have turn'd my leaping-time into a crutch,
Than have seen this.
Gui. O sweetest, fairest lily!
My brother wears thee not th' one half so well
As when thou grew'st thyself.
Bel. O melancholy!
Who ever yet could sound thy bottom, find

[20] *Toys* is *trifles*, things of no regard. See vol. xiv. page 267, note 5.

Thy ooze? or show what coast thy sluggish crare[21]
Might easiliest harbour in? — Thou blessèd thing!
Jove knows what man thou mightst have made; but ah,
Thou diedst, a most rare boy, of melancholy! —
How found you him?

Arv. Stark,[22] as you see:
Thus smiling, as some fly had tickled slumber,
Not as death's dart, being laugh'd at; his right cheek
Reposing on a cushion.

Gui. Where?

Arv. O' the floor;
His arms thus leagued: I thought he slept; and put
My clouted brogues[23] from off my feet, whose rudeness
Answer'd my steps too loud.

Gui. Why, he but sleeps:
If he be gone, he'll make his grave a bed;
With female fairies will his tomb be haunted,
And worms will not come to thee.[24]

[21] A *crare*, variously spelt *craer*, *crayer*, *craye*, is a small ship. So in Hackluyt's *Voyages*: "Your barke or *craer* made here for the river of Volga and the Caspian sea is very litle, of the burthen of 30 tonnes at the most." And in North's Plutarch: "Timoleon gave them all the aid he could; sending them corn from Catana in the fisher boats and small *crayers*, which got into the castle many times."

[22] *Stark* is kindred in sense with *stiff* and *cold*. So in *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. 1: "Each part, deprived of supple government, shall, *stiff* and *stark* and *cold*, appear like death."

[23] "*Clouted* brogues" are coarse wooden shoes, strengthened with *clout* or *hob*-nails. In some parts of England thin plates of iron, called *clouts*, are fixed to the shoes of rustics.

[24] Still another instance of abrupt change of person. See page 72, note 9. — The Poet here alludes to the office of the fairies in keeping off worms, insects, and such-like vermin; it being held that where they haunted no such noxious creatures could be found. That duty is specially assigned them in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, ii. 2. — Webster's *Vittoria Corombona* has a very noble strain of poetry which may have been suggested by that in the text: at all events, it is well worth repeating here:

Arv. With fairest flowers,
Whilst Summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave: thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose; nor
The azure harebell, like thy veins; no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, who, not to slander,
Out-sweeten'd not thy breath: the ruddock would,
With charitable bill, — O bill, sore shaming
Those rich-left heirs that let their fathers lie
Without a monument! — bring thee all this;
Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,
To winter-guard thy corse.[25]

Gui. Pr'ythee, have done;
And do not play in wench-like words with that
Which is so serious. Let us bury him,
And not protract with admiration what
Is now due debt. To th' grave!

Arv. Say, where shall's lay him?

O thou soft natural death! thou art joint twin
To sweetest slumber: no rough-bearded comet
Stares on thy mild departure: the dull owl
Beats not against thy casement: the hoarse wolf
Scents not thy carrion: pity winds thy corse,
While horror waits on princes.

[25] The old poets are fond of alluding to the tender reverences here ascribed to the *red-breast*. Webster has the following lines, being part of the dirge sung by Cornelia for young Marcello, in the play quoted in the preceding note:

Call for the robin red-breast and the wren,
  Since o'er shady grove they hover,
  And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.

Drayton, also, has it, evidently in imitation of Shakespeare:

Covering with *moss* the dead's unclosèd eye,
The red-breast teacheth *charity*.

But perhaps the most touching use of it is in the old ballad of *The Children in the Wood*, which is too well known to need quoting here.

Gui. By good Euriphile, our mother.
Arv. Be't so:
And let us, Polydore, though now our voices
Have got the mannish crack, sing him to th' ground,
As once our mother; use like note and words,
Save that Euriphile must be Fidele.
Gui. Cadwal,
I cannot sing: I'll weep, and word it with thee;
For notes of sorrow out of tune are worse
Than priests and fanes that lie.
Arv. We'll speak it, then.
Bel. Great griefs, I see, medicine the less; for Cloten
Is quite forgot. He was a queen's son, boys;
And, though he came our enemy, remember
He's paid for that:[26] though mean and mighty rotting
Together have one dust, yet reverence —
That angel of the world — doth make distinction
Of place 'tween high and low. Our foe was princely;
And though you took his life as being our foe,
Yet bury him as a prince.
Gui. Pray you, fetch him hither.
Thersites' body is as good as Ajax',
When neither are alive.
Arv. If you'll go fetch him,
We'll say our song the whilst. — Brother, begin.
[*Exit* BELARIUS.
Gui. Nay, Cadwal, we must lay his head to th' East;
My father hath a reason for't.
Arv. 'Tis true.
Gui. Come on, then, and remove him.
Arv. So. Begin.

[26] That is, he is *punished* for that, or *has suffered* for it.

SONG.

*Gui. _Fear no more the heat o' the Sun,_
*_Nor the furious Winter's rages;_
*_Thou thy worldly task hast done,_
*_Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:_
*_Golden lads and girls all must,_
*_As chimney-sweepers, come to dust._

*Arv. _Fear no more the frown o' the great,_
*_Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;_
*_Care no more to clothe and eat;_
*_To thee the reed is as the oak:_
*_The sceptre, learning, physic, must_
*_All follow this, and come to dust._

*Gui. _Fear no more the lightning-flash,_
*Arv. _Nor th' all-dreaded thunder-stone;_[27]
*Gui. _Fear not slander, censure rash;_
*Arv. _Thou hast finish'd joy and moan:_
*Both. _All lovers young, all lovers must_
*_Consign_[28] _to thee, and come to dust._

*Gui. _No exorciser_[29] _harm thee!_
*Arv. _Nor no witchcraft charm thee!_
*Gui. _Ghost unlaid forbear thee!_
*Arv. _Nothing ill come near thee!_
*Both. _Quiet consummation_[30] _have;_
*_And renownèd be thy grave!_

27 _Thunder-stone_ was the common word for _thunder-bolt._

28 To "consign to thee" is to "seal the same contract _with_ thee"; that is, add their names to thine upon the register of death.

29 _Exorciser_ anciently signified a person who could raise spirits, not one who lays them. See vol. xiv. page 50, note 57.

30 Probably the best comment on this is furnished by the closing prayer in the Church Burial-Service: "That we, with all those who are departed in the true faith of Thy holy Name, may have our perfect _consummation_ and bliss, both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting glory."—The

Re-enter BELARIUS *with the body of* CLOTEN.

Gui. We've done our obsequies: come, lay him down.
Bel. Here's a few flowers; but 'bout midnight, more:
The herbs that have on them cold dew o' the night
Are strewings fitt'st for graves. — Upon Earth's face
You were as flowers; now wither'd: even so
These herblets shall, which we upon you strow. —
Come on, away; apart upon our knees.
The ground that gave them first has them again:
Their pleasures here are past, so is their pain.
[*Exeunt* BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, *and* ARVIRAGUS.
Imo. [*Awaking.*] Yes, sir, to Milford-Haven; which is the way?
I thank you. By yond bush? Pray, how far thither?
'Ods pittikins![31] can it be six mile yet?
I've gone all night: faith, I'll lie down and sleep.
But, soft! no bedfellow. — O gods and goddesses!
[*Seeing the body of* CLOTEN.
These flowers are like the pleasures of the world;
This bloody man, the care on't. I hope I dream;
For so I thought I was a cave-keeper,
And cook to honest creatures: but 'tis not so;
'Twas but a bolt of nothing, shot at nothing,
Which the brain makes of fumes:[32] our very eyes

previous arrangement was, that "*Euriphile* should be *Fidele*," yet neither name occurs in the dirge. A discrepancy for which it is not easy to account.

[31] This diminutive adjuration is derived from *God's pity*, by the addition of *kin*. So we have also *God's bodikin*. See vol. xiv. page 213, note 83.

[32] A dream-arrow, shot at a dream-object, and all the effect of a heated brain. The use of *bolt* for a certain kind of arrow was very common. — Mr. Joseph Crosby furnishes me an apt comment on this passage: "Imogen, waking from her long trance, in the confusion of her mind cannot at once distinguish dreams from realities. She sees the flowers and the dead body by her, and most naturally utters 'I hope I dream,' yet it seems terribly real; then, recollecting what she was doing before she fell into this sleep, she says,

Are sometimes, like our judgments, blind. Good faith,
I tremble still with fear: but if there be
Yet left in Heaven as small a drop of pity
As a wren's eye, fear'd gods, a part of it!
The dream's here still, even when I wake; it is
Without me, as within me; not imagined, felt.
A headless man! The garments of Posthúmus!
I know the shape of's leg: this is his hand;
His foot Mercurial; his Martial thigh;
The brawns of Hercules: but his Jovial face[33] —
Murder in Heaven? — How! 'Tis gone. — Pisanio,
All curses madded Hecuba gave the Greeks,
And mine to boot, be darted on thee! Thou,
Conspired with that irregulous[34] devil, Cloten,
Hast here cut off my lord. To write and read
Be henceforth treacherous! Damn'd Pisanio
Hath with his forgèd letters, — damn'd Pisanio —
From this most bravest vessel of the world
Struck the main-top! — O Posthumus! alas,
Where is thy head? where's that? Ah me! where's that?
Pisanio might have kill'd thee at the heart,
And left thy head on. — How should this be? Pisanio?
'Tis he and Cloten: malice and lucre in them
Have laid this woe here. O, 'tis pregnant,[35] pregnant!
The drug he gave me, which he said was precious

'For *so* I thought I was a cave-keeper,' that is, with the same appearance of reality; 'but 'tis not so,' 'tis not *real;* the whole is surely a dream."

33 "*Jovial* face" is a face like Jove. The epithet is frequently so used in the old dramatic writers. So in Heywood's *Silver Age:* "Alcides here will stand to plague you all with his high *Jovial* hand."

34 *Irregulous* must mean *lawless, licentious, out of rule.* The word has not hitherto been met with elsewhere; but in Reinold's *God's Revenge against Adultery*, we have "*irregulated* lust."

35 *Pregnant,* as explained by Nares, is "full of force or conviction, or full of proof in itself"; that is, *plain, evident.*

And cordial to me, have I not found it
Murderous to th' senses? That confirms it home;
This is Pisanio's deed and Cloten's: O! —
Give colour to my pale cheek with thy blood,
That we the horrider may seem to those
Which chance to find us. O, my lord, my lord!
[*Throws herself on the body.*

Enter LUCIUS, *a* Captain *and other* Officers, *and a* Soothsayer.

Cap. To them the legions garrison'd in Gallia,
After your will, have cross'd the sea; attending[36]
You here at Milford-Haven with your ships,
They are in readiness.
Luc. But what from Rome?
Cap. The Senate hath stirr'd up the cônfiners[37]
And gentlemen of Italy; most willing spirits,
That promise noble service: and they come
Under the conduct of bold Iachimo,
Sienna's brother.
Luc. When expect you them?
Cap. With the next benefit o' the wind.
Luc. This forwardness
Makes our hopes fair. Command our present numbers
Be muster'd; bid the captains look to't. — Now, sir,
What have you dream'd of late of this war's purpose?
Sooth. Last night the very gods show'd me a vision, —
I fast and pray'd for their intelligence,[38] — thus:
I saw Jove's bird, the Roman eagle, wing'd
From th' spongy South[39] to this part of the West,

[36] Here, as often, *attend* is *wait for* or *await*. See vol. xvii. p. 236, note 32.

[37] *Confiners* are *borderers;* those dwelling on or near the confines.

[38] It was no common dream, but sent from the *very gods*, or the gods themselves. *Fast* for *fasted*, as we have in another place of this play *lift* for *lifted*. In *King John* we have *heat* for *heated*, *waft* for *wafted*.

[39] To us Americans it is not very clear why *spongy* should be thus used

There vanish'd in the sunbeams; which portends —
Unless my sins abuse my divination —
Success to th' Roman host.
Luc. Dream often so,
And never false! — Soft, ho! what trunk is here
Without his top? The ruin speaks that sometime
It was a worthy building. How! a page!
Or dead, or sleeping on him? But dead, rather;
For nature doth abhor to make his bed
With the defunct, or sleep upon the dead.
Let's see the boy's face.
Cap. He's alive, my lord.
Luc. He'll, then, instruct us of this body. — Young one,
Inform us of thy fortunes; for it seems
They crave to be demanded. Who is this
Thou makest thy bloody pillow? Or who was he
That, otherwise than noble Nature did,
Hath alter'd that good picture?[40] What's thy interest
In this sad wreck? How came it? Who is it?
What art thou?
Imo. I am nothing; or, if not,
Nothing to be were better. This was my master,
A very valiant Briton and a good,
That here by mountaineers lies slain. Alas!
There is no more such masters: I may wander
From East to Occident, cry out for service,
Try many, and all good, serve truly, never
Find such another master.

as an epithet of *south*. I suppose it is because, in England, winds from the South are apt to be charged with moisture, and to bring fogs or rains, as if they had *sponged* up a good deal of water. So, in *The Tempest*, iv. 1, we have "*spongy* April." "*Foggy* south," and "*dew-dropping* south" also occur.

[40] Who has altered this picture, so as to make it other than Nature *did* it?

Luc. 'Lack, good youth!
Thou movest no less with thy complaining than
Thy master in bleeding: say his name, good friend.
Imo. Richard du Champ. — [*Aside.*] If I do lie, and do
No harm by it, though the gods hear, I hope
They'll pardon it. — Say you, sir?
Luc. Thy name?
Imo. Fidele, sir.
Luc. Thou dost approve thyself the very same:
Thy name well fits thy faith, thy faith thy name.
Wilt take thy chance with me? I will not say
Thou shalt be so well master'd; but, be sure,
No less beloved. The Roman Emperor's letters,
Sent by a Consul to me, should not sooner
Than thine own worth prefer thee:[41] go with me.
Imo. I'll follow, sir. But first, an't please the gods,
I'll hide my master from the flies, as deep
As these poor pickaxes[42] can dig: and, when
With wild wood-leaves and weeds I've strew'd his grave,
And on it said a century[43] of prayers,
Such as I can, twice o'er, I'll weep and sigh;
And, leaving so his service, follow you,
So please you entertain me.
Luc. Ay, good youth;
And rather father thee than master thee. — My friends,
The boy hath taught us manly duties: let us
Find out the prettiest daisied plot we can,
And make him with our pikes and partisans
A grave: come, arm him.[44] — Boy, he is preferr'd

[41] *Prefer* was formerly used precisely as we use *recommend.*

[42] "These poor *pickaxes*" are her *hands.*

[43] A *century* is, properly, a *hundred;* here used for an indefinite number.

[44] That is, "take him up in your arms." So in *The Two Noble Kinsmen:* "*Arm* your prize; I know you will not lose her." The prize is Emilia.

By thee to us; and he shall be interr'd
As soldiers can. Be cheerful; wipe thine eyes:
Some falls are means the happier to arise. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. — *The Same. A Room in* CYMBELINE'S *Palace.*

Enter CYMBELINE, Lords, PISANIO, *and* Attendants.

Cym. Again; and bring me word how 'tis with her. —
A fever with the absence of her son; [*Exit an* Attendant.
Madness, of which her life's in danger. — Heavens,
How deeply you at once do touch me! Imogen,
The great part of my comfort, gone; my Queen
Upon a desperate bed, and in a time
When fearful wars point at me; her son gone,
So needful for this present: it strikes me, past
The hope of comfort. — But for thee, thee, fellow,
Who needs must know of her departure, and
Dost seem so ignorant, we'll enforce it from thee
By a sharp torture.
Pis. Sir, my life is yours,
I humbly set it at your will: but, for my mistress,
I nothing know where she remains, why gone,
Nor when she purposes return. Beseech your Highness,
Hold me your loyal servant.
1 Lord. Good my liege,
The day that she was missing he was here:
I dare be bound he's true, and shall[1] perform
All parts of his subjection loyally. For Cloten,
There wants no diligence in seeking him,
And he'll, no doubt, be found.
Cym. The time is troublesome. —

[1] *Shall* for *will*, as we have before had *will* for *shall.*

[*To* PISANIO.] We'll slip you for a season; but our jealousy
Does yet depend.[2]

1 Lord. So please your Majesty,
The Roman legions, all from Gallia drawn,
Are landed on your coast; with a supply
Of Roman gentlemen, by the Senate sent.

Cym. Now for the counsel of my son and Queen!
I am amazed with matter.[3]

1 Lord. Good my liege,
Your preparation can affront[4] no less
Than what you hear of: come more, for more you're ready:
The want is, but to put those powers in motion
That long to move.

Cym. I thank you. Let's withdraw;
And meet the time as it seeks us. We fear not
What can from Italy annoy us; but
We grieve at chances here. Away!

[*Exeunt all but* PISANIO.

Pis. I've had no letter from my master since
I wrote him Imogen was slain: 'tis strange:
Nor hear I from my mistress, who did promise
To yield me often tidings; neither know I
What is betid to Cloten; but remain
Perplex'd in all. The Heavens still must work.
Wherein I'm false I'm honest; not true, to be true:
These present wars shall find I love my country,
Even to the note o' the King,[5] or I'll fall in them.

[2] Meaning, "My suspicion is still *undetermined.*" In the same manner, we now say, "the *cause is depending.*"

[3] *Amazed* in its literal sense of *perplexed* or *bewildered; in a maze.* Often so.—*Matter* is, here, variety of business.

[4] To *affront,* as the word is here used, is to *meet, encounter,* or *face.* See vol. xiv. page 218, note 5.

[5] Meaning, "So that even the King shall take *notice* of my valour."

All other doubts, by time let them be clear'd:
Fortune brings in some boats that are not steer'd. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. — *The Same. Wales: before the Cave of* BELARIUS.

Enter BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, *and* ARVIRAGUS.

Gui. The noise is round about us.
Bel. Let us from it.
Arv. What pleasure, sir, find we in life, to lock[1] it
From action and adventure?
Gui. Nay, what hope
Have we in hiding us? This way,[2] the Romans
Must or for Britons slay us, or receive us
For barbarous and unnatural revolts[3]
During their use, and slay us after.
Bel. Sons,
We'll higher to the mountains; there secure us.
To the King's party there's no going: newness
Of Cloten's death — we being not known, not muster'd
Among the bands — may drive us to a render[4]
Where we have lived; and so extort from's that
Which we have done, whose answer would be death
Drawn on with torture.
Gui. This is, sir, a doubt[5]
In such a time nothing becoming you,
Nor satisfying us.

[1] *To lock*, for *in locking*, or *by locking*. See page 29, note 6.

[2] We acting, or if we act, in this way.

[3] *Revolts* for *revolters*, that is, *rebels*. So in *King John*, v. 2: "And you degenerate, you ingrate *revolts*." The Poet has many like forms of language. — "During their *use*" may mean, "as long as they have any use for us"; or, perhaps, during their present armed occupancy.

[4] A *render*, as the word is here used, is an *account*, or *confession*.

[5] *Doubt* for *fear;* as we have before had the verb. See page 35, note 14.

Arv. It is not likely
That when they hear the Roman horses neigh,
Behold their quarter'd fires,[6] have both their eyes
And ears so cloy'd importantly as now,
That they will waste their time upon our note,[7]
To know from whence we are.

Bel. O, I am known
Of many in the army: many years,
Though Cloten then but young, you see, not wore him
From my remembrance. And, besides, the King
Hath not deserved my service nor your loves;
Who find in my exile the want of breeding,
The certainty of this hard life;[8] aye hopeless
To have the courtesy your cradle promised,
But to be still hot Summer's tanlings, and
The shrinking slaves of Winter.

Gui. Than be so,
Better to cease to be. Pray, sir, to th' army:
I and my brother are not known; yourself
So out of thought, and thereto so o'ergrown,[9]
Cannot be question'd.

Arv. By this Sun that shines,
I'll thither: what thing is it that I never
Did see man die![10] scarce ever look'd on blood,
But that of coward hares, hot goats, and venison!

[6] The *fires* in the several quarters of the Roman army; their watch-fires.

[7] In taking *notice* of us. *Note* the same as in the preceding scene.

[8] The *certain consequence* of this hard life.

[9] Overgrown with *hair* and *beard*. Posthumus afterwards alludes to Belarius as one who "deserved so long a breeding as his *white beard* came to." — *Thereto* is *in addition* thereto. So in *The Winter's Tale*, i. 2: "As you are certainly a gentleman; *thereto* clerk-like, experienced."

[10] Shakespeare has many exclamative phrases and sentences without the article, where modern usage requires it. So, here, we should say, "what *a* thing it is," &c. See vol. xiv. page 29, note 13.

Never bestrid a horse, save one that had
A rider like myself, who ne'er wore rowel
Nor iron on his heel! I am ashamed
To look upon the holy Sun, to have
The benefit of his blest beams, remaining
So long a poor unknown.

Gui. By Heavens, I'll go:
If you will bless me, sir, and give me leave,
I'll take the better care; but, if you will not,
The hazard therefore due fall on me by
The hands of Romans!

Arv. So say I, — Amen.

Bel. No reason I, since of your lives you set
So slight a valuation, should reserve
My crack'd one to more care. Have with you, boys!
If in your country wars you chance to die,
That is my bed too, lads, and there I'll lie:
Lead, lead. — [*Aside.*] The time seems long; their blood thinks scorn,[11]
Till it fly out, and show them princes born. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *Britain. The Roman Camp.*

Enter POSTHUMUS *with a bloody handkerchief.*

Post. Yea, bloody cloth, I'll keep thee; for I wish'd
Thou shouldst be colour'd thus. — You married ones,
If each of you should take this course, how many
Must murder wives much better than themselves

11 To *think scorn* is old language, meaning simply to *scorn*.

For wrying[1] but a little! — O Pisanio!
Every good servant does not all commands:
No bond[2] but to do just ones. — Gods! if you
Should have ta'en vengeance on my faults, I never
Had lived to put on[3] this: so had you saved
The noble Imogen to repent; and struck
Me, wretch more worth your vengeance. But, alack,
You snatch some hence for little faults; that's love,
To have them fall no more: you some permit
To second ills with ills, each elder worse,[4]
And make them dreaded to the doers' thrift.[5]
But Imogen is your own: do your best wills,
And make me bless'd t' obey! — I am brought hither
Among th' Italian gentry, and to fight
Against my lady's kingdom: 'tis enough
That, Britain, I have kill'd thy mistress; peace!
I'll give no wound to thee. — Therefore, good Heavens,
Hear patiently my purpose: I'll disrobe me
Of these Italian weeds, and suit myself
As does a Briton peasant: so I'll fight
Against the part I come with; so I'll die
For thee, O Imogen, even for whom my life

[1] This word was quite common in the Poet's time. So in Sidney's *Arcadia*: "That from the right line of virtue are *wryed* to these crooked shifts."

[2] *Bond*, or *band*, was used in the general sense of *obligation*.

[3] To *put on* is to *incite*, *instigate*. See vol. xvii. page 219, note 30.

[4] Here *elder* has the exact sense of *later*, *elder deed* being put for the deed of an elder man. So the Poet has "*elder* days" repeatedly for the days of an elder man, that is, *later* days. See vol. x. page 181, note 3.

[5] *Them* refers to *ills*, the evil deeds in question. And so the speaker's thought seems to be, that some bold knaves are permitted to go on from bad to worse, the crimes causing the doer of them to be *feared*, and so working for his security and profit. In other words, boldness in wrong sometimes brings impunity by scaring earthly Justice from her propriety. The text is thus an apt variation upon the well-known passage in *Hamlet*: "And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself buys out the law."

Is, every breath, a death: and thus, unknown,
Pitied nor hated, to the face of peril
Myself I'll dedicate. Let me make men know
More valour in me than my habits show.
Gods, put the strength o' the Leonati in me!
To shame the guise o' the world, I will begin
The fashion, — less without and more within. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. — *The Same. A Field between the British and Roman Camps.*

Enter, from one side, LUCIUS, IACHIMO, IMOGEN, *and the Roman* Army; *from the other side, the British* Army; LEONATUS POSTHUMUS *following, like a poor soldier. They march over and go out. Alarums. Then enter again, in skirmish,* IACHIMO *and* POSTHUMUS: *he vanquisheth and disarmeth* IACHIMO, *and then leaves him.*

Iach. The heaviness and guilt within my bosom
Takes off my manhood: I've belied a lady,
The Princess of this country, and the air on't
Revengingly enfeebles me; or could this carl,[1]
A very drudge of Nature's, have subdued me
In my profession? Knighthoods and honours, borne,
As I wear mine, are titles but of scorn.
If that thy gentry, Britain, go before
This lout as he exceeds our lords, the odds[2]
Is, that we scarce are men, and you are gods. [*Exit.*

The battle continues; the Britons *fly;* CYMBELINE *is taken: then enter, to his rescue,* BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, *and* ARVIRAGUS.

Bel. Stand, stand! We have th' advantage of the ground;

[1] *Carl* or *churl* is a clown or countryman, and is used by our old writers in opposition to a gentleman.

[2] *Odds*, here, has about the force of *chance* or *likelihood;* as, in weighing, the odds turns the scales. See vol. vii. page 253, note 14.

The lane is guarded: nothing routs us but
The villainy of our fears.

Gui.
Arv. } Stand, stand, and fight!

Re-enter POSTHUMUS, *and seconds the* Britons: *they rescue* CYMBELINE, *and all exeunt. Then re-enter* LUCIUS, IACHIMO, *and* IMOGEN.

Luc. Away, boy, from the troops, and save thyself;
For friends kill friends, and the disorder's such
As war were hoodwink'd.

Iach. 'Tis their fresh supplies.

Luc. It is a day turn'd strangely: or betimes
Let's re-enforce, or fly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. — *The Same. Another Part of the Field.*

Enter POSTHUMUS *and a British* Lord.

Lord. Camest thou from where they made the stand?

Post. I did:
Though you, it seems, came from the fliers.

Lord. I did.

Post. No blame be to you, sir; for all was lost,
But that the Heavens fought: the King himself
Of his wings destitute, the army broken,
And but the backs of Britons seen, all flying
Through a strait lane; the enemy full-hearted,
Lolling the tongue with slaughtering, having work
More plentiful than tools to do't, struck down
Some mortally, some slightly touch'd, some falling
Merely through fear; that [1] the strait pass was damm'd
With dead men hurt behind, and cowards living
To die with lengthen'd shame.

[1] Here, as often, *that* is equivalent to *so that*, or *insomuch that*.

Lord. Where was this lane?
Post. Close by the battle, ditch'd, and wall'd with turf;
Which gave advantage to an ancient soldier,
An honest one, I warrant; who deserved
So long a breeding as his white beard came to,
In doing this for's country. Athwart the lane,
He, with two striplings,—lads more like to run
The country base[2] than to commit such slaughter;
With faces fit for masks, or rather fairer
Than those for preservation cased or shame,—
Made good the passage; cried to those that fled,
Our Britain's harts die flying, not our men:
To darkness fleet, souls that fly backwards! Stand!
Or we are Romans, and will give you that
Like beasts which you shun beastly, and may 'scape,
But to look back[3] *in frown: stand, stand!* These three,
Three thousand confident, in act as many,—
For three performers are the file when all
The rest do nothing,—with this word, *Stand, stand!*
Accommodated by the place, more charming[4]
With their own nobleness,—which could have turn'd

[2] *Base* was the common name of a rustic game, in which the swiftest runner was the winner. So *bid the base* was to run fast, and dare another to pursue; something like what, in my boyhood, was called *playing tag*.—Here the Poet took an incident of Scottish history, as given in Holinshed: "There was, near the place of the battle, a long lane, fenced on both sides with ditches and walls made of turf, through the which the Scots that fled were beaten down by the enemies on heaps. Here Hay, with his sons, supposing they might best stay the flight, placed themselves overthwart the lane, beat them back whom they met fleeing, and spared neither friend nor foe, but down they went all such as came within their reach; wherewith divers hardy personages cried unto their fellows to return back unto the battle."

[3] "But *to look* back" for "but *by looking* back." See page 114, note 1.

[4] Acting like magic upon *others*, charming others into bravery by their own act. To *charm* was used for to *enchant*. See page 20, note 4.

A distaff to a lance, — gilded pale looks:[5]
Part shame, part spirit renew'd; that some, turn'd coward
But by example, — O, a sin in war,
Damn'd in the first beginners! — 'gan to look
The way that they did, and to grin like lions
Upon the pikes o' the hunters. Then began
A stop i' the chaser, a retire; anon
A rout, confusion-thick: forthwith they fly
Chickens, the way which they stoop'd eagles; slaves,
The strides they victors made:[6] and now our cowards,
Like fragments in hard voyages,[7] became
The life o' the need: having found the back-door open
Of the unguarded hearts, Heavens, how they wound!
Some slain before; some dying; some their friends
O'er-borne i' the former wave: ten, chased by one,
Are now each one the slaughter-man of twenty:
Those that would die or e'er resist are grown
The mortal bugs[8] o' the field.

Lord. This was strange chance,
A narrow lane, an old man, and two boys!

Post. Nay, do not wonder at it: you are made
Rather to wonder at the things you hear
Than to work any. Will you rhyme upon't,
And vent it for a mockery? Here is one:
Two boys, an old man twice a boy, a lane,
Preserved the Britons, was the Romans' bane.

Lord. Nay, be not angry, sir.

Post. 'Lack, to what end?

[5] Brought back the blood into cheeks that were blanched through fear.

[6] They fly like slaves, crest-fallen, unmanned, over the same ground where they had advanced proudly, striding onwards as victors.

[7] Like fragments of food saved up at sea, and at last, from the length of the voyage, found necessary to keep the crew from starving.

[8] *Mortal*, again, in the sense of *deadly* or *fatal*. See page 22, note 8. — *Bugs* is *bugbears*, *terrors*. See vol. vii. page 190, note 9.

Who dares not stand his foe, I'll be his friend;
For, if he'll do as he is made to do,
I know he'll quickly fly my friendship too.
You've put me into rhyme.

Lord. Farewell; you're angry.

Post. Still going?[9] — [*Exit* Lord.
This is a lord! O noble misery!
To be i' the field, and ask, what news, of me!
To-day how many would have given their honours
T' have saved their carcasses! took heel to do't,
And yet died too! I, in mine own woe charm'd,[10]
Could not find death where I did hear him groan,
Nor feel him where he struck: being an ugly monster,
'Tis strange he hides him in fresh cups, soft beds,
Sweet words; or hath more ministers than we
That draw his knives i' the war. Well, I will find him:
For being now a favourer to the Briton,[11]
No more a Briton, I've resumed again
The part I came in: fight I will no more,
But yield me to the veriest hind that shall
Once touch my shoulder. Great the slaughter is
Here made by th' Roman; great the answer be
Britons must take: for me, my ransom's death;
On either side I come to spend my breath;
Which neither here I'll keep nor bear again,

[9] Meaning, "you run away from me, as you did from the enemy."

[10] *Charms* were supposed to render men invulnerable in battle. So in Chapman's Homer, *Iliad*, Book iv.: "Turne head, ye well-rode peeres of Troy, feed not the Grecians pride; they are not *charm'd* against your points of steele." And Macbeth, when he comes to the last mortal encounter with Macduff, says to him, referring to the weird incantations, "Let fall thy blade on *vulnerable* crests; I bear a *charmed* life."

[11] The meaning probably is, "whereas I was but now a favourer to the Briton, I am such no longer; I have resumed the part of a Roman soldier, and that will assure me of a speedy death." Here, as often, *for* is *instead of*, probably.

But end it by some means for Imogen.

Enter two British Captains *and* Soldiers.

1 Cap. Great Jupiter be praised! Lucius is taken:
'Tis thought the old man and his sons were angels.
2 Cap. There was a fourth man, in a silly habit,[12]
That gave th' affront with them.
1 Cap. So 'tis reported:
But none of 'em can be found. — Stand! who is there?
Post. A Roman;
Who had not now been drooping here, if seconds
Had answer'd him.
2 Cap. Lay hands on him: a dog,
A lag of Rome shall not return to tell
What crows have peck'd them here. He brags his service
As if he were of note: bring him to th' King.

Enter CYMBELINE, *attended;* BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, PISANIO, Soldiers, *and Roman* Captives. *The* Captains *present* POSTHUMUS *to* CYMBELINE, *who delivers him over to a* Jailer: *after which, all go out.*

SCENE IV. — *The Same. A Prison.*

Enter POSTHUMUS *and two* Jailers.

1 Jail. You shall not now be stol'n, you've locks upon you;
So graze as you find pasture.[1]
2 Jail. Ay, or stomach.
[*Exeunt* Jailers.
Post. Most welcome, bondage! for thou art a way,
I think, to liberty. Yet am I better

[12] That is, a *simple* or *rustic dress;* the proper meaning of *silly.*

[1] The Jailer refers to the custom of putting a lock on a horse's leg when he is turned out to pasture; especially if the horse is wild or hard to catch.

Than one that's sick o' the gout; since he had rather
Groan so in perpetuity than be cured
By th' sure physician, death; who is the key
T' unbar these locks. My conscience, thou art fetter'd
More than my shanks and wrists: you good gods, give me
The penitent instrument[2] to pick that bolt,
Then free for ever! Is't enough I'm sorry?
So children temporal fathers do appease;
Gods are more full of mercy. Must I repent?
I cannot do it better than in gyves,
Desired more than constrain'd:[3] to satisfy,—
If of my freedom 'tis the main part,—take
No stricter render of me than my all.[4]

[2] "The *penitent* instrument" is the instrument of *penitence;* that which gives freedom from the bondage of a guilty conscience.

[3] In gyves, or *fetters*, that are more desired *by me* than *forced* or *strained upon me.* The peculiar use of *constrain'd* makes the passage somewhat obscure.—In what follows, though the sense is perfect, the density of thought is such as to render the expression almost enigmatical. Posthumus is regarding his soul as fettered by crime, and repentance as the means of setting it free. And so strong, so deep, so binding is his sense of guilt, that he longs to make all the atonement possible, and to procure absolution at the cost of life itself. His supreme desire is to die; he cannot bear the thought of any lighter sacrifice. His life for Imogen's seems to him but a poor retribution at the best; nor would he have the gods take up with less; and so his prayer is, that, if this will but discharge the main part of his debt, if this will answer or satisfy the chief condition of his acquittal, they will take it, and set his conscience free.

[4] Mr. Joseph Crosby understands *stricter* here as meaning *more restricted* or *smaller;* and to this sense he aptly quotes from Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity:* "As they took the compass of their commission *stricter* or larger, so their dealings were more or less moderate." This use of the word, though it may appear rather strange to us, was not very uncommon; and so Richardson, among his definitions of *strict*, has "confined, contracted, narrowed." Wordsworth, also, in his great poem *On the Power of Sound*, calls the ear a "*strict* passage, through which sighs are brought." Here *strict* evidently means *narrow* or *strait.* So that the sense of the text is, "Take *no less surrender* of me than my all." The logic of the speech comes out more harmonious and clear, by taking *stricter* thus.

I know you are more clement than vile men,
Who of their broken debtors take a third,
A sixth, a tenth, letting them thrive again
On their abatement: that's not my desire:
For Imogen's dear life take mine; and though
'Tis not so dear, yet 'tis a life; you coin'd it.
'Tween man and man they weigh not every stamp;
Though light, take pieces for the figure's sake:[5]
You rather mine, being yours: and so, great powers,
If you will make this audit, take my life,
And cancel these cold bonds.[6] — O Imogen!
I'll speak to thee in silence. [*Sleeps.*

**Solemn music. Enter, as in an apparition,* SICILIUS LEON-
*ATUS, *Father to* POSTHUMUS, *an old man, attired like a*
**warrior; leading in his hand an ancient Matron, his*
**wife, and Mother to* POSTHUMUS, *with music before them:*
**then, after other music, follow the two young* LEONATI,
**Brothers to* POSTHUMUS, *with wounds as they died in the*
**wars. They circle* POSTHUMUS *round, as he lies sleeping.*

**Sici.* No more, thou thunder-master, show
*Thy spite on mortal flies:
*With Mars fall out, with Juno chide,
*That thy adulteries
*Rates and revenges.

[5] "Men do not take every stamp or piece by weight; some pieces, though too light, they accept, because of the figure stamped upon them, and in order to make up the number required: still more, then, great powers, accept my life, since it is your gift, and has the notes of your mintage."

[6] We have a like expression in *Macbeth*, iii. 2: "*Cancel* and tear to pieces that great *bond* which keeps me paled." By "these cold bonds," however, Posthumus probably means his life, or the conditions of it. Dr. Ingleby observes that "the old writers compared the hindrances of the body to gyves"; and he quotes from *The Optick Glasse of Humors*, 1607: "Our bodies were the prisons and bridewils of our soules, wherein they lay manicled and fettered in Gives."

*Hath my poor boy done aught but well,
*Whose face I never saw?
*I died whilst in the womb he stay'd
*Attending Nature's law:
*Whose father then, as men report
*Thou orphans' father art,
*Thou shouldst have been, and shielded him
*From this earth-vexing smart.

**Moth.* Lucina lent not me her aid,
*But took me in my throes;
*That from me was Posthúmus ript,
*Came crying 'mongst his foes,
*A thing of pity!

**Sici.* Great Nature, like his ancestry,
*Moulded the stuff so fair,
*That he deserved the praise o' the world,
*As great Sicilius' heir.

**1 Bro.* When once he was mature for man,
*In Britain where was he
*That could stand up his parallel;
*Or fruitful object be
*In eye of Imogen, that best
*Could deem his dignity?

**Moth.* With marriage wherefore was he mock'd,
*To be exiled, and thrown
*From Leonati' seat, and cast
*From her his dearest one,
*Sweet Imogen?

**Sici.* Why did you suffer Iachimo,
*Slight thing of Italy,
*To taint his nobler heart and brain
*With needless jealousy?

*And to become the geck[7] and scorn
*O' the other's villainy?

**2 Bro.* For this, from stiller seats we come,
*Our parents, and us twain,
*That, striking in our country's cause,
*Fell bravely, and were slain;
*Our fealty and Tenantius' right
*With honour to maintain.

**1 Bro.* Like hardiment Posthúmus hath
*To Cymbeline perform'd:
*Then, Jupiter, thou king of gods,
*Why hast thou thus adjourn'd
*The graces for his merits due;
*Being all to dolours turn'd?

**Sici.* Thy crystal window ope; look out;
*No longer exercise
*Upon a valiant race thy harsh
*And potent injuries.

**Moth.* Since, Jupiter, our son is good,
*Take off his miseries.

**Sici.* Peep through thy marble mansion; help;
*Or we poor ghosts will cry
*To th' shining synod of the rest
*Against thy deity.

**Both Bro.* Help, Jupiter; or we appeal,
*And from thy justice fly.

*JUPITER *descends in thunder and lightning, sitting upon an* **eagle: he throws a thunderbolt. The* Ghosts *fall on* **their knees.*

**Jup.* No more, you petty spirits of region low,
*Offend our hearing; hush! How dare you ghosts

[7] *Geck* is an old word for *fool*, or one made a jest and mockery.

*Accuse the thunderer, whose bolt, you know,
*Sky-planted, batters all rebelling coasts?
*Poor shadows of Elysium, hence! and rest
*Upon your never-withering banks of flowers:
*Be not with mortal accidents opprest;
*No care of yours it is; you know 'tis ours.
*Whom best I love I cross; to make my gift,
*The more delay'd, delighted.[8] Be content;
*Your low-laid son our godhead will uplift:
*His comforts thrive, his trials well are spent.
*Our Jovial star reign'd at his birth, and in
*Our temple was he married. Rise, and fade!
*He shall be lord of Lady Imogen,
*And happier much by his affliction made.
*This tablet lay upon his breast; wherein
*Our pleasure his full fortune doth confine:
*And so, away! no further with your din
*Express impatience, lest you stir up mine.—
*Mount, eagle, to my palace crystalline. [*Ascends.*

**Sici.* He came in thunder; his celestial breath
*Was sulphurous to smell: the holy eagle
*Stoop'd, as to foot us:[9] his ascension is
*More sweet than our bless'd fields: his royal bird
*Prunes the immortal wing, and cloys[10] his beak,
*As when his god is pleased.

**All.* Thanks, Jupiter!

**Sici.* The marble pavement closes, he is enter'd

[8] The more *delightful*, or the more *delighted in*, the longer it is delayed. An instance, such as I have often noted, of the indiscriminate use of active and passive forms.

[9] To grasp us in his pounces. The word is thus used by Herbert: "And till they *foot* and clutch their prey."

[10] In ancient language the *cleys* or *clees* of a bird or beast are the same with *claws* in modern speech. To *claw* their beaks is an accustomed action with hawks and eagles.

*His radiant roof. Away! and, to be blest,
*Let us with care perform his great behest.
[*The* Ghosts *vanish.*

**Post.* [*Waking.*] Sleep, thou hast been a grandsire, and begot
*A father to me; and thou hast created
*A mother and two brothers: but — O scorn! —
*Gone! they went hence so soon as they were born:
*And so I am awake. Poor wretches that depend
*On greatness' favour dream as I have done;
*Wake, and find nothing. But, alas, I swerve:
*Many dream not to find, neither deserve,
*And yet are steep'd in favours; so am I,
*That have this golden chance, and know not why.
*What fairies haunt this ground? A book? O rare one!
*Be not, as is our fangled world,[11] a garment
*Nobler than that it covers: let thy effects
*So follow, to be most unlike our courtiers,
*As good as promise.

*[Reads.] *Whenas a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown,*
**without seeking find, and be embraced by a piece of tender*
**air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopp'd branches,*
**which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed*
**to the old stock, and freshly grow; then shall Posthumus*
**end his miseries, Britain be fortunate, and flourish in peace*
**and plenty.*

*'Tis still a dream, or else such stuff as madmen
*Tongue, and brain not;[12] either both, or nothing;
*Or senseless speaking, or a speaking such
*As sense cannot untie. Be what it is,

[11] *Fangled* is *trifling.* Hence *new-fangled,* still in use for new toys or trifles.

[12] To "*tongue,* and *brain* not" is to *speak,* and not *comprehend.*

*The action of my life is like it, which
*I'll keep, if but for sympathy.

Re-enter First Jailer.

1 Jail. Come, sir, are you ready for death?

Post. Over-roasted rather; ready long ago.

1 Jail. Hanging is the word, sir: if you be ready for that, you are well cooked.

Post. So, if I prove a good repast to the spectators, the dish pays the shot.

1 Jail. A heavy reckoning for you, sir. But the comfort is, you shall be called to no more payments, fear no more tavern-bills; which are often the sadness of parting, as the procuring of mirth: you come in faint for want of meat, depart reeling with too much drink; sorry that you have paid too much, and sorry that you are paid [13] too much; purse and brain both empty, — the brain the heavier for being too light, the purse too light being drawn of heaviness: of this contradiction you shall now be quit. O, the charity of a penny cord! it sums up thousands in a trice: you have no true debitor and creditor but it; of what's past, is, and to come, the discharge: your neck, sir, is pen, book, and counters; [14] so the acquittance follows.

Post. I am merrier to die than thou art to live.

1 Jail. Indeed, sir, he that sleeps feels not the toothache: but a man that were to sleep your sleep, and a hangman to help him to bed, I think he would change places with his officer; for, look you, sir, you know not which way you shall go.

Post. Yes, indeed do I, fellow.

1 Jail. Your death has eyes in's head, then; I have not seen him so pictured: you must either be directed by some

[13] *Paid* here means *subdued* or *overcome* by the liquor.

[14] *Counters* were pieces of false coin used in casting accoun

that take upon them to know, or take upon yourself that which I am sure you do not know; or jump [15] the after-inquiry on your own peril: and how you shall speed in your journey's end, I think you'll never return to tell one.

Post. I tell thee, fellow, there are none want eyes to direct them the way I am going, but such as wink and will not use them.

1 Jail. What an infinite mock is this, that a man should have the best use of eyes to see the way of blindness! I am sure hanging's the way of winking.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Knock off his manacles; bring your prisoner to the King.

Post. Thou bring'st good news; I am call'd to be made free.

1 Jail. I'll be hang'd, then.

Post. Thou shalt be then freer than a jailer; no bolts for the dead. [*Exeunt* POSTHUMUS *and* Messenger.

1 Jail. Unless a man would marry a gallows, and beget young gibbets, I never saw one so prone.[16] Yet, on my conscience, there are verier knaves desire to live, for all he be a Roman: and there be some of them too that die against their wills; so should I, if I were one. I would we were all of one mind, and one mind good; O, there were desolation of jailers and gallowses! I speak against my present profit; but my wish hath a preferment in't. [*Exeunt.*

[15] To *jump* is to *risk* or *hazard*. See vol. xvii. page 35, note 4.

[16] *Prone* here signifies *ready*, *prompt*. So in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, translated by Sir Arthur Georges: "Thessalian fierie steeds, for use of war so *prone* and fit." And in Wilfride Holme's poem, entitled *The Fall and Evil Success of Rebellion*, 1537: "With bombard and basilisk, with men *prone* and vigorous."

SCENE V. — *The Same.* CYMBELINE'S *Tent.*

Enter CYMBELINE, BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, PISANIO, Lords, Officers, *and* Attendants.

Cym. Stand by my side, you whom the gods have made
Preservers of my throne. Woe is my heart
That the poor soldier, that so richly fought,
Whose rags shamed gilded arms, whose naked breast
Stepp'd before targs of proof,[1] cannot be found:
He shall be happy that can find him, if
Our grace can make him so.

Bel. I never saw
Such noble fury in so poor a thing;
Such precious deeds in one that promised nought
But beggary and poor looks.

Cym. No tidings of him?

Pis. He hath been search'd among the dead and living,
But no trace of him.

Cym. To my grief, I am
The heir of his reward; which I will add
To you, the liver, heart, and brain of Britain,
[*To* BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, *and* ARVIRAGUS.
By whom I grant she lives. 'Tis now the time
To ask of whence you are: report it.

Bel. Sir,
In Cambria are we born, and gentlemen:
Further to boast were neither true nor modest,
Unless I add we're honest.

Cym. Bow your knees.
Arise my knights o' the battle: I create you

[1] *Targs of proof* is *targets,* or shields, that are proof against warlike weapons. The Poet has many like phrases.

Companions to our person, and will fit you
With dignities becoming your estates.[2] —

Enter CORNELIUS *and* Ladies.

There's business in these faces. — Why so sadly
Greet you our victory? you look like Romans,
And not o' the Court of Britain.
Cor. Hail, great King!
To sour your happiness, I must report
The Queen is dead.
Cym. Whom worse than a physician
Would this report become? But I consider
By medicine life may be prolong'd, yet death
Will seize the doctor too. How ended she?
Cor. With horror, madly dying, like her life;
Which, being cruel to the world, concluded
Most cruel to herself. What she confess'd
I will report, so please you: these her women
Can trip me, if I err; who with wet cheeks
Were present when she finish'd.
Cym. Pr'ythee, say.
Cor. First, she confess'd she never loved you; only
Affected greatness got by you, not you:
Married your royalty, was wife to your place;
Abhorr'd your person.
Cym. She alone knew this;
And, but she spoke it dying, I would not
Believe her lips in opening it. Proceed.
Cor. Your daughter, whom she bore in hand[3] to love
With such integrity, she did confess
Was as a scorpion to her sight; whose life,

[2] *Estates* for *rank*. In such cases, old usage prefers the plural.

[3] To *bear in hand* is an old phrase meaning to *pretend*, to *profess*. Shakespeare has it repeatedly. See vol. xvii. page 60, note 15.

But that her flight prevented it, she had
Ta'en off by poison.

Cym. O most delicate fiend!
Who is't can read a woman? — Is there more?

Cor. More, sir, and worse. She did confess she had
For you a mortal mineral; which, being took,
Should by the minute feed on life, and, lingering,
By inches waste you: in which time she purposed,
By watching, weeping, tendance, kissing, to
O'ercome you with her show; and so in time,
When she had fit[4] you with her craft, to work
Her son into th' adoption of the crown:
But, failing of her end by his strange absence,
Grew shameless-desperate; open'd, in despite
Of Heaven and men, her purposes; repented
The evils she hatch'd were not effected; so,
Despairing, died.

Cym. Heard you all this, her women?

1 Lady. We did, so please your Highness.

Cym. Mine eyes
Were not in fault, for she was beautiful;
Mine ears, that heard her flattery; nor my heart,
That thought her like her seeming; it had been vicious
To have mistrusted her: yet, O my daughter!
That it was folly in me, thou mayst say,
And prove it in thy feeling. Heaven mend all! —

Enter LUCIUS, IACHIMO, *the* Soothsayer, *and other Roman* Prisoners, *guarded;* POSTHUMUS *behind, and* IMOGEN.

Thou comest not, Caius, now for tribute; that
The Britons have razed out, though with the loss
Of many a bold one; whose kinsmen have made suit

[4] *Fit*, again, for *fitted;* shortened to suit the metre. See page 79, note 20.

That their good souls may be appeased with slaughter
Of you their captives, which ourself have granted:
So, think of your estate.

Luc. Consider, sir, the chance of war: the day
Was yours by accident; had it gone with us,
We should not, when the blood was cool, have threaten'd
Our prisoners with the sword. But, since the gods
Will have it thus, that nothing but our lives
May be call'd ransom, let it come: sufficeth
A Roman with a Roman's heart can suffer;
Augustus lives to think on't; and so much
For my peculiar care. This one thing only
I will entreat: My boy, a Briton born,
Let him be ransom'd: never master had
A page so kind, so duteous-diligent,
So tender over his occasions, true,
So feat,[5] so nurse-like: let his virtue join
With my request, which I'll make bold your Highness
Cannot deny. He hath done no Briton harm,
Though he have served a Roman: save him, sir,
And spare no blood besides.

Cym. I've surely seen him;
His favour is familiar to me.[6] —
Boy, thou hast look'd thyself into my grace,
And art mine own. I know not why nor wherefore
To say *Live, boy:* ne'er thank thy master; live;
And ask of Cymbeline what boon thou wilt,

[5] *Feat* is *apt, dexterous, neat.* "Tender over his occasions" probably means delicate and quick to anticipate his master's wants, and prompt in doing whatever occasion might require.

[6] *Favour* is *countenance* or *look.* Often so used. — Here we have a noteworthy instance of what may be termed unconscious recollection without recognition. Certain most subtile and delicate threads of association awaken the father's feelings at once. The same thing occurs in at least two other cases. See vol. vii. page 254, note 16.

Fitting my bounty and thy state, I'll give it;
Yea, though thou do demand a prisoner,
The noblest ta'en.

Imo. I humbly thank your Highness.

Luc. I do not bid thee beg my life, good lad;
And yet I know thou wilt.

Imo. No, no; alack,
There's other work in hand: I see a thing
Bitter to me as death; your life, good master,
Must shuffle for itself.

Luc. The boy disdains me,
He leaves me, scorns me; briefly die their joys
That place them on the truth of girls and boys.
Why stands he so perplex'd?

Cym. What wouldst thou, boy?
I love thee more and more; think more and more
What's best to ask. Know'st him thou look'st on? speak,
Wilt have him live? Is he thy kin? thy friend?

Imo. He is a Roman; no more kin to me
Than I to your Highness; who, being born your vassal,
Am something nearer.

Cym. Wherefore eyest him so?

Imo. I'll tell you, sir, in private, if you please
To give me hearing.

Cym. Ay, with all my heart,
And lend my best attention. What's thy name?

Imo. Fidele, sir.

Cym. Thou'rt my good youth, my page;
I'll be thy master: walk with me; speak freely.

[CYMBELINE *and* IMOGEN *converse apart.*

Bel. Is not this boy revived from death?

Arv. One sand another
Not more resembles: that sweet rosy lad
Who died, and was Fidele. — What think you?

Gui. The same dead thing alive.

Bel. Peace, peace! see further; he eyes us not; forbear;
Creatures may be alike: were't he, I'm sure
He would have spoke to us.

Gui. But we saw him dead.

Bel. Be silent; let's see further.

Pis. [*Aside.*] 'Tis my mistress:
Since she is living, let the time run on
To good or bad. [CYMBELINE *and* IMOGEN *come forward.*

Cym. Come, stand thou by our side;
Make thy demand aloud. — [*To* IACH.] Sir, step you forth;
Give answer to this boy, and do it freely;
Or, by our greatness, and the grace of it,
Which is our honour, bitter torture shall
Winnow the truth from falsehood. — On, speak to him.

Imo. My boon is, that this gentleman may render[7]
Of whom he had this ring.

Post. [*Aside.*] What's that to him?

Cym. That diamond upon your finger, say
How came it yours?

Iach. 'Twould torture me to leave unspoken that
Which, to be spoke, would torture thee.[8]

Cym. How! me?

Iach. I'm glad to be constrain'd to utter that
Torments me to conceal. By villainy
I got this ring: 'twas Leonatus' jewel,
Whom thou didst banish; and — which more may grieve thee,

[7] To *render*, in the same sense as the substantive before; to *give an account*, or to *acknowledge*. See page 114, note 4. The Poet has *render* repeatedly in the kindred sense of *report* or *represent*.

[8] Here, again, we have the infinitive used gerundively, as *to be spoke* is equivalent to *in being spoke*, or *by* being spoke. The plain English of the passage is, "It would torture me to leave unspoken that which it would torture you to hear." See page 29, note 6.

As it doth me — a nobler sir ne'er lived
'Twixt sky and ground. Wilt thou hear more, my lord?
Cym. All that belongs to this.
Iach. That paragon, thy daughter, —
For whom my heart drops blood, and my false spirits
Quail to remember, — Give me leave; I faint.
Cym. My daughter! what of her? Renew thy strength:
I had rather thou shouldst live while nature will
Than die ere I hear more: strive, man, and speak.
Iach. Upon a time, — unhappy was the clock
That struck the hour! — it was in Rome, — accursed
The mansion where! — 'twas at a feast, — O, would
Our viands had been poison'd, or at least
Those which I heaved to head! — the good Posthúmus, —
What should I say? he was too good to be
Where ill men were, and was the best of all
Amongst the rarest of good ones, — sitting sadly,
Hearing us praise our loves of Italy,
For beauty that made barren the swell'd boast
Of him that best could speak; for feature, laming
The shrine of Venus, or straight-pight Minerva,
Postures beyond brief nature;[9] for condition,
A shop of all the qualities that man
Loves woman for; besides that hook of wiving,[10]
Fairness which strikes the eye, —

[9] *Feature* is here used with reference to the whole person, and in the sense of *proportion.* — *Shrine* is *statue.* — *Pight* is an old form of *pitched* or *fixed. Straight-pight* probably means *fixed* or *standing erect. Postures* has reference to the statues of Venus and Minerva: *whose* postures or attitudes outgo the brief or variable attitudes of nature. The Poet here shows a knowledge of the inmost essence of Art; that its office is to surpass nature by idealizing Nature's forms, concentrating the life and spirit of many changing forms into one permanent form.

[10] "That hook of wiving" is, I take it, the hook that catches that silly fish, a husband. — *Condition* is *temper* or *disposition;* as usual.

Cym. I stand on fire:
Come to the matter.
Iach. All too soon I shall,
Unless thou wouldst grieve quickly. This Posthúmus,
Most like a noble lord in love, and one
That had a royal lover, took his hint;
And, not dispraising whom we praised, — therein
He was as calm as virtue, — he began
His mistress' picture; which by his tongue being made,
And then a mind put in't, either our brags
Were crack'd of kitchen-trulls,[11] or his description
Proved us unspeaking sots.[12]
Cym. Nay, nay, to th' purpose.
Iach. Your daughter's chastity, there it begins.
He spake of her, as Dian had hot dreams,
And she alone were cold; whereat I, wretch,
Made scruple of his praise; and wager'd with him
Pieces of gold 'gainst this which then he wore
Upon his honour'd finger, to attain
In suit the place of's bed, and win this ring
By hers and mine adultery. He, true knight,
No lesser of her honour confident
Than I did truly find her, stakes this ring;
And would so, had it been a carbuncle
Of Phœbus' wheel; and might so safely, had it
Been all the worth of's car. Away to Britain
Post I in this design: well may you, sir,
Remember me at Court; where I was taught

[11] To *crack* is, in one of its old senses, to *brag, boast*, or, as we now say, to *crack up*. So that here the meaning is, "our brags were bragged," that is, *made*, &c. So we have *cracker* for *boaster* in *King John*, ii. 1: "What cracker is this same that deafs our ears with this abundance of superfluous breath?"

[12] In old English, *sot* often means *fool*, — the French sense of the word. Shakespeare repeatedly has it so. See vol. v. page 155, note 12.

Of your chaste daughter the wide difference
'Twixt amorous and villainous. Being thus quench'd
Of hope, not longing, mine Italian brain
'Gan in your duller Britain operate
Most vilely; for my vantage, excellent:
And, to be brief, my practice so prevail'd
That I return'd with simular proof enough
To make the noble Leonatus mad,
By wounding his belief in her renown
With tokens thus and thus; averring notes
Of chamber-hanging, pictures, this her bracelet,—
O cunning, how I got it!—nay, some marks
Of secret on her person, that he could not
But think her bond of chastity quite crack'd,
I having ta'en the forfeit. Whereupon—
Methinks, I see him now—
Post. [*Coming forward.*] Ay, so thou dost,
Italian fiend!—Ah me, most credulous fool,
Egregious murderer, thief, any thing
That's due to all the villains past, in being,
To come! O, give me cord, or knife, or poison,
Some upright justicer![13]—Thou, King, send out
For torturers ingenious: it is I
That all th' abhorrèd things o' the Earth amend
By being worse than they. I am Posthúmus,
That kill'd thy daúghter: villain-like, I lie;
That caused a lesser villain than myself,
A sacrilegious thief, to do't. The temple

[13] This good old word occurs several times in Shakespeare. And so in Bishop Hall's *Contemplation* on "Christ's Procession to the Temple": "With what fear and astonishment did the repining offenders look upon so unexpected a *Justicer*, while their conscience lashed them more than those cords, and the terror of that meek Chastiser more affrighted them than His blows." See vol. xv. page 96, note 3.

Of virtue was she; yea, and she herself.[14]
Spit, and throw stones, cast mire upon me, set
The dogs o' the street to bay me! every villain
Be call'd Posthúmus Leonatus; and
Be villainy less than 'twas![15] — O Imogen!
My queen, my life, my wife! O Imogen,
Imogen, Imogen!

Imo. Peace, my lord; hear, hear —

Post. Shall's have a play of this? Thou scornful page,
There lie thy part. [*Striking her: she falls.*

Pis. O, gentlemen, help, help!
Mine and your mistress! — O, my lord Posthúmus!
You ne'er kill'd Imogen till now. — Help, help! —
Mine honour'd lady!

Cym. Does the world go round?

Post. How come these staggers on me?

Pis. Wake, my mistress!

Cym. If this be so, the gods do mean to strike me
To death with mortal joy.

Pis. How fares my mistress?

Imo. O, get thee from my sight;
Thou gavest me poison: dangerous fellow, hence!
Breathe not where princes are.

Cym. The tune[16] of Imogen!

Pis. Lady,
The gods throw stones of sulphur on me, if
That box I gave you was not thought by me
A precious thing; I had it from the Queen.

[14] Not only the temple of virtue, but virtue herself.

[15] That is, "let villainy be henceforth considered less villainous than it was." A variation upon what he has just said, "that all the abhorrèd things o' the Earth amend by being worse than they."

[16] The King now recognizes his daughter's *voice*. *Tune* is but another form of *tone*. The power of unconscious association is rarely exemplified in Cymbeline's instant taking to the supposed stranger.

Cym. New matter still?

Imo. It poison'd me.

Cor. O gods! —
I left out one thing which the Queen confess'd,
Which must approve thee honest: *If Pisanio*
Have, said she, *given his mistress that confection*
Which I gave him for cordial, she is served
As I would serve a rat.

Cym. What's this, Cornelius?

Cor. The Queen, sir, very oft impórtuned me
To temper poisons for her; still pretending
The satisfaction of her knowledge only
In killing creatures vile, as cats and dogs,
Of no esteem: I, dreading that her purpose
Was of more danger, did compound for her
A certain stuff, which, being ta'en, would cease
The present power of life;[17] but in short time
All offices of nature should again
Do their due functions. — Have you ta'en of it?

Imo. Most like I did, for I was dead.[18]

Bel. My boys,
There was our error.

Gui. This is, sure, Fidele.

Imo. Why did you throw your wedded lady from you?
Think that you are upon a rock; and now
Throw me again.[19] [*Embracing him.*

17 *Cease* was not unfrequently used thus as a transitive verb.

18 The word *dead* was often used, to denote a state of suspended animation. So the original stage-direction on page 102 reads "*Enter Arviragus, with Imogen* dead, *bearing her in his arms.*" And in *The Faerie Queene*, iv. 7, 9:

> For she (deare Ladie) all the way was *dead*,
> Whilest he in armes her bore; but, when she felt
> Herselfe downe soust, she wakèd out of dread
> Streight into griefe, that her deare hart nigh swelt,
> And eft gan into tender teares to melt.

19 White calls this "a passage of impenetrable obscurity." There may

Post. Hang there like fruit, my soul,
Till the tree die!

Cym. How now, my flesh, my child!
What, makest thou me a dullard in this act?
Wilt thou not speak to me?

Imo. Your blessing, sir. [*Kneeling.*

Bel. [*To* GUIDE. *and* ARVI.] Though you did love this youth, I blame ye not;
You had a motive for't.

Cym. My tears that fall
Prove holy water on thee! Imogen,
Thy mother's dead.

Imo. I'm sorry for't, my lord.

Cym. O, she was naught; and 'long of[20] her it was
That we meet here so strangely: but her son
Is gone, we know not how nor where.

Pis. My lord,
Now fear is from me, I'll speak troth. Lord Cloten,
Upon my lady's missing, came to me
With his sword drawn; foam'd at the mouth, and swore,
If I discover'd not which way she was gone,
It was my instant death. By accident,
I had a feignèd letter of my master's
Then in my pocket; which directed him

indeed be some doubt as to what Imogen means by *rock*, whether the edge of a precipice, or something else. But she has a rare vein of humour in her composition, which crops out now and then; though, apparently, without her being at all conscious of it; as when she calls her hands "these poor pickaxes." Here her humour seems to take on a form of loving and trustful irony; for, after what has just passed in her hearing, she knows right well that her husband would die a hundred times rather than lift his finger to hurt her. So I think Heath's explanation is very satisfactory: "Consider that you have just escaped being wrecked in the full persuasion of my infidelity and death, and are at last got safe on a rock; now throw me from you again, if your heart will give you leave."

[20] *Along of* is an old phrase equivalent to *because of.*

To seek her on the mountains near to Milford;
Where, in a frenzy, in my master's garments,
Which he enforced from me, away he posts
With unchaste purpose, and with oath to violate
My lady's honour: what became of him
I further know not.

Gui. Let me end the story:
I slew him there.

Cym. Marry, the gods forfend!
I would not thy good deeds should from my lips
Pluck a hard sentence: pr'ythee, valiant youth,
Deny't again.

Gui. I've spoke it, and I did it.

Cym. He was a prince.

Gui. A most incivil one: the wrongs he did me
Were nothing prince-like; for he did provoke me
With language that would make me spurn the sea,
If it could so roar to me: I cut off's head;
And am right glad he is not standing here
To tell this tale of mine.

Cym. I'm sorry for thee:
By thine own tongue thou art condemn'd, and must
Endure our law: thou'rt dead.

Imo. That headless man
I thought had been my lord.

Cym. Bind the offender,
And take him from our presence.

Bel. Stay, sir King:
This man is better than the man he slew;
As well descended as thyself; and hath
More of thee merited than a band of Clotens
Had ever scorse for.[21] — [*To the* Guard.] Let his arms alone;

[21] *Scorse* is an old word used repeatedly, both as noun and verb, by

They were not born for bondage.
Cym. Why, old soldier,
Wilt thou undo the worth thou art unpaid for,
By tasting of our wrath?[22] How of descent
As good as we?
Arv. In that he spake too far.
Cym. And thou shalt die for't.
Bel. We will die all three,
But I will prove[23] that two on's are as good
As I have given out him. — My sons, I must,
For mine own part, unfold a dangerous speech,
Though, haply, well for you.
Arv. Your danger's ours.
Gui. And our good his.
Bel. Have at it, then! —
By leave: Thou hadst, great King, a subject who
Was call'd Belarius.
Cym. What of him? he is
A banish'd traitor.
Bel. He it is that hath
Assumed this age:[24] indeed, a banish'd man;
I know not how a traitor.
Cym. Take him hence:

Spenser, Drayton, Jonson, and others, in the general sense of *bargain, exchange, offset, equivalent, payment.* So that the meaning here is, "this man is worth more to thee than a whole regiment of such men as Cloten ever had an equivalent for." See vol. xvi. page 203, note 15.

[22] There is some obscurity here owing to the effect being put for the cause. The full sense is, "by doing that which thou knowest must draw our wrath upon thee"; or, "in consequence of which thou art sure to taste our wrath."

[23] *But* is here exceptive, from *be out,* and is equivalent to *unless, except,* or *if not.* So that the meaning is, "We will all three die, *if* I *do not,* or *if* I shall *not.*" See vol. xv. page 104, note 12.

[24] Referring to the different appearance which he now makes in comparison with that when Cymbeline last saw him.

The whole world shall not save him.
Bel. Not too hot!
First pay me for the nursing of thy sons;
And let it be confiscate all, so soon
As I've received it.
Cym. Nursing of my sons!
Bel. I am too blunt and saucy; here's my knee:
Ere I arise, I will prefer[25] my sons;
Then spáre not the old father. Mighty sir,
These two young gentlemen, that call me father,
And think they are my sons, are none of mine;
They are the issue of your loins, my liege,
And blood of your begetting.
Cym. How! my issue!
Bel. So sure as you your father's. I, old Morgan,
Am that Belarius whom you sometime banish'd:
Your pleasure was my mere offence, my punishment
Itself, and all my treason;[26] that I suffer'd
Was all the harm I did. These gentle Princes —
For such and so they are — these twenty years
Have I train'd up: those arts they have as[27] I
Could put into them; my breeding was, sir, as
Your Highness knows. Their nurse, Euriphile,
Whom for the theft I wedded, stole these children
Upon my banishment: I moved her to't;
Having received the punishment before,
For that which I did then: beaten for loyalty
Excited me to treason: their dear loss,
The more of you 'twas felt, the more it shaped

[25] To *prefer* here means to *advance*, to *promote*.

[26] The meaning is, "my crime, my punishment, and all the treason I was charged with, existed only in what you were pleased to think."

[27] I have before noted that the relatives *as* and *that* or *which* were often used indiscriminately. See vol. xiv. page 13, note 7.

Unto my end of stealing them. But, gracious sir,
Here are your sons again; and I must lose
Two of the sweet'st companions in the world.
The benediction of these covering heavens
Fall on their heads like dew! for they are worthy
To inlay heaven with stars.

Cym. Thou weep'st, and speak'st.
The service that you three have done is more
Unlike than this thou tell'st.[28] I lost my children:
If these be they, I know not how to wish
A pair of worthier sons.

Bel. Be pleased awhile.
This gentleman, whom I call Polydore,
Most worthy Prince, as yours, is true Guiderius;
This gentleman, my Cadwal, Arviragus,
Your younger princely son: he, sir, was lapp'd
In a most curious mantle, wrought by th' hand
Of his Queen-mother, which, for more probation,
I can with ease produce.

Cym. Guiderius had
Upon his neck a mole, a sanguine star;
It was a mark of wonder.

Bel. This is he;
Who hath upon him still that natural stamp:
It was wise Nature's end in the donation,
To be his evidence now.

Cym. O, what! am I
A mother to the birth of three? Ne'er mother
Rejoiced deliverance more. — Blest may you be,
That, after this strange starting from your orbs,

[28] "Thy tears give testimony to the sincerity of thy relation; and I have the less reason to be incredulous, because the actions which you have done within my knowledge are more incredible than the story which you relate." The King reasons very justly. — JOHNSON.

You may reign in them now![29] — O Imogen,
Thou hast lost by this a kingdom.
Imo. No, my lord;
I've got two worlds by't. — O my gentle brothers,
Have we thus met? O, never say hereafter
But I am truest speaker: you call'd me brother,
When I was but your sister; I you brothers,
When ye were so indeed.
Cym. Did you e'er meet?
Arv. Ay, my good lord.
Gui. And at first meeting loved;
Continued so, until we thought he died.
Cor. By the Queen's dram she swallow'd.
Cym. O rare instinct!
When shall I hear all through? This fierce[30] abridgment
Hath to it circumstantial branches, which
Distinction should be rich in. — Where, how, lived you?
And when came you to serve our Roman captive?
How parted with your brothers? how first met them?
Why fled you from the Court, and whither? These,
And your three motives[31] to the battle, with
I know not how much more, should be demanded;
And all the other by-dependencies,
From chance to chance: but nor the time nor place
Will serve our long inter'gatories.[32] See,
Posthúmus anchors upon Imogen;
And she, like harmless lightning, throws her eye
On him, her brothers, me, her master, hitting

[29] *Orb* and *orbit* were used synonymously. See vol. xvi. page 104, note 15.

[30] *Fierce* was often used in the general sense of *rapid*, *vehement*, *excessive*, *violent*. See vol. xv. page 253, note 10.

[31] "Your three motives" means "the motives of you three." So, in *Romeo and Juliet*, "both our remedies" means "the remedy for us both."

[32] Such was the form often used; of course, for *interrogatories*. It occurs twice in *The Merchant of Venice*, near the close.

Each object with a joy: the counterchange
Is severally in all. — Let's quit this ground,
And smoke the temple with our sacrifices. —
[*To* BELA.] Thou art my brother; so we'll hold thee ever.
Imo. You are my father too; and did relieve me,
To see this gracious season.
Cym. All o'erjoy'd,
Save these in bonds: let them be joyful too,
For they shall taste our comfort.
Imo. My good master,
I will yet do you service.
Luc. Happy be you!
Cym. The fórlorn soldier that so nobly fought,
He would have well becomed this place, and graced
The thankings of a king.
Post. I am, sir King,
The soldier that did company these three
In poor beseeming; 'twas a fitment for
The purpose I then follow'd. — That I was he,
Speak, Iachimo: I had you down, and might
Have made you finish.
Iach. [*Kneeling.*] I am down again:
But now my heavy conscience sinks my knee,
As then your force did. Take that life, beseech you,
Which I so often owe: but your ring first;
And here the bracelet of the truest Princess
That ever swore her faith.
Post. Kneel not to me:
The power that I have on you is to spare you;
The malice towards you to forgive you: live,
And deal with others better.
Cym. Nobly doom'd!
We'll learn our freeness of a son-in-law;
Pardon's the word to all.

Arv. You holp us, sir,
As you did mean indeed to be our brother;
Joy'd are we that you are.

Post. Your servant, Princes. — Good my lord of Rome,
Call forth your soothsayer. As I slept, methought
Great Jupiter, upon his eagle back'd,
Appear'd to me, with other spritely shows [33]
Of mine own kindred: when I waked, I found
This label on my bosom; whose containing [34]
Is so from sense in hardness, that I can
Make no collection [35] of it: let him show
His skill in the construction.

Luc. Philarmonus, —

Sooth. Here, my good lord.

Luc. Read, and declare the meaning.

*Sooth. [Reads.] *Whenas a lion's whelp shall, to him-
*self unknown, without seeking find, and be embraced by a
*piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be
*lopp'd branches, which, being dead many years, shall after
*revive, be jointed to the old stock, and freshly grow; then
*shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate, and
flourish in peace and plenty.[36]

*Thou, Leonatus, art the lion's whelp;
*The fit and apt construction of thy name,

[33] *Spritely shows* are groups of sprites, ghostly appearances.

[34] "Whose containing" means, evidently, "the contents of which." — "So from sense in hardness" means, apparently, so *difficult to be understood*, or so *hard to make sense of*.

[35] A *collection* is a corollary, a consequence deduced from premises. So in *Hamlet*: "Her speech is nothing, yet the unshaped use of it doth move the hearers to *collection*."

[36] Coleridge remarks upon this strange "label" as follows: "It is not easy to conjecture why Shakespeare should have introduced this ludicrous scroll, which answers no one purpose, either propulsive or explicatory, unless as a joke on etymology." See Critical Notes on the preceding scene.

*Being Leo-natus, doth import so much. —
*[*To* CYMBE.] The piece of tender air, thy virtuous daughter,
*Which we call *mollis aer*, and *mollis aer*
*We term it *mulier*; — [*To* POSTHU.] which *mulier* I divine
*Is thy most constant wife; who, even now,
*Answering the letter of the oracle,
*Unknown to you, unsought, were clipp'd about
*With this most tender air.
**Cym.* This hath some seeming.
Sooth. The lofty cedar, royal Cymbeline,
Personates thee: and thy lopp'd branches point
Thy two sons forth; who, by Belarius stol'n,
For many years thought dead, are now revived,
To the majestic cedar join'd; whose issue
Promises Britain peace and plenty.
Cym. Well,
By peace we will begin; — and, Caius Lucius,
Although the victor, we submit to Cæsar,
And to the Roman Empire; promising
To pay our wonted tribute, from the which
We were dissuaded by our wicked Queen;
Whom Heavens,[37] in justice, both on her and hers,
Have laid most heavy hand.
Sooth. The fingers of the powers above do tune
The harmony of this peace. The vision
Which I made known to Lucius, ere the stroke
Of this yet scarce-cold battle, at this instant
Is full accomplish'd; for the Roman eagle,
From South to West on wing soaring aloft,
Lessen'd herself, and in the beams o' the Sun
So vanish'd; which foreshow'd our princely eagle,

[37] The construction is somewhat irregular, and the language probably elliptical; "*Upon* whom." The Poet has many such ellipses.

Th' imperial Cæsar, should again unite
His favour with the radiant Cymbeline,
Which shines here in the West.

Cym. Laud we the gods;
And let our crookèd smokes climb to their nostrils
From our bless'd altars. Publish we this peace
To all our subjects. Set we forward; let
A Roman and a British ensign wave
Friendly together: so through Lud's-town march;
And in the temple of great Jupiter
Our peace we'll ratify; seal it with feasts.—
Set on there!—Never was a war did cease,
Ere bloody hands were wash'd, with such a peace.

[*Exeunt.*

CRITICAL NOTES.

ACT I., SCENE I.

Page 9. *You do not meet a man but frowns: our bloods*
Not *more obey the heavens than our courtiers*
Still seem as does the King. — In the second of these lines, the original has *No* instead of *Not*, and in the third *Kings* instead of *King*. *No* does not give the right sense. Coleridge proposed to substitute *countenances* for *courtiers*, and Keightley conjectures "courtiers' *faces*"; either of which would accord with *King's*. But with the two slight changes here made we get substantially the same sense. The second correction is Tyrwhitt's.

P. 10. *But not a courtier,*
Although they wear their faces to the bent
Of the King's looks, but *hath a heart that is*
Glad at the thing they scowl at. — So Theobald. Instead of "*but* hath a heart that is," the original reads "hath a heart that is *not*." The sense is about the same either way; but I can hardly think the Poet would have endured such a halt in the metre. Pope's second edition reads as in the text.

P. 11. *I cannot delve him to the root: his father*
Was call'd Sicilius, who did gain *his honour*
Against the Romans with Cassibelan; &c. — The original has *joyne* instead of *gain*, which is White's correction. Jervis conjectured *win*, which gives the same sense as *gain*, but involves more of *literal* change. I do not well see how to get any fitting sense out of *join*.

P. 14. *You gentle gods, give me but this I have,*
And cere *up my embracements from a next*, &c. — The original has "And *seare* up"; but this seems to have been only another way of spelling *cere*. Singer reads "And *seal* up." See foot-note 9.

P. 14. *Remain, remain thou here*
While sense can keep it *on.* — As both *thou* and *it* refer to the ring, Pope substituted *thee* for *it*, and has been followed by various editors. Perhaps rightly; for the change of person is very harsh. See, however, foot-note 10.

P. 15. *O disloyal thing,*
That shouldst repair my youth, thou heap'st
A year's age on me! — To complete the second of these lines, Hanmer reads "thou heapest *many*"*;* Capell, "thou heap'st *instead.*" Perhaps it should be "thou heap'st *more than* A year's age on me."

P. 17. *About some half hour hence,*
I *pray you, speak with me.* — The original omits *I.*

ACT I., SCENE 2.

P. 19. 2 Lord. *I'll attend your lordship.* — The original assigns this speech to the first Lord. Corrected by Capell.

ACT I., SCENE 3.

P. 19. *No, madam; for so long*
As he could make me with this *eye or ear*
Distinguish him from others, &c. — So Theobald. The original reads "with *his* eye," &c. Coleridge proposed "with *the* eye"; which I am apt to think the better correction.

P. 20. *I would have broke mine eye-strings, crack'd* the balls,
To look upon him; &c. — Here the original has an awkward and uncharacteristic anti-climax, — "crack'd *them but* to look upon him." Staunton proposed to read "I would have *crack'd* mine eye-strings, *broke their balls,* To look upon him." But I think the climax is duly made without transposing *broke* and *crack'd;* while in the proposed reading *their* would of course refer to *eye-strings,* and thus untune the language, if not the sense.

ACT I., SCENE 4.

P. 22. *For taking a beggar without* his *quality.* — The old text has "without *lesse* quality"; which expresses no meaning at all suited to the place. Rowe changed *less* to *more,* and has been followed by some

editors. For my part, I could not print *less*, and did not like to print *more*. The reading in the text was proposed by Knight. It seems to me just the thing. See foot-note 5.

P. 23. *But, upon my mended judgment,—if I offend* not *to say it is mended*, &c.—The original lacks *not*. A very obvious error. Corrected by Rowe.

P. 24. *I could* but *believe she excelled many.*—So Heath. The original has *not* instead of *but*. The misprint occurs repeatedly, and *not* is palpably wrong here. Malone reads "could *not but* believe," and is followed by Dyce and the Cambridge Editors. But that reading seems to me to convey a wrong sense: it means, I could *not help* believing; whereas the meaning seems rather to be, "I could *only* believe"; I could believe only that she excelled *many*, not that she excelled *all*.

P. 24. *The one may be sold or given, if there were wealth enough for the* purchase *or merit for the gift.*—The original reads "or given, *or* if there were wealth enough for the *purchases*," &c. Corrected by Rowe. Doubtless an accidental repetition of *or*.

P. 25. *You are* afraid, *and therein the wiser.*—So Warburton. The original has "You are *a Friend*." The correction is approved by the next sentence: "But I see you have some religion in you, that you *fear*." See foot-note 20.

P. 26. *If I bring you sufficient testimony that I have enjoy'd the dearest bodily part of your mistress, my ten thousand ducats are* mine; *so is your diamond too: if I come off, and leave her in such honour as you have trust in, she your jewel, this your jewel, and my gold are yours;* &c.—So Warburton, who is followed by Hanmer and Capell. The original reads "If I bring you *no* sufficient testimony," and "my ten thousand Duckets are *yours*." So, instead of stating *the two alternative conditions*, as the case plainly requires, Iachimo is made to state *one of them twice over* in different words. Surely this is absurd enough to justify the correction.

ACT I., SCENE 5.

P. 27. *I* do *wonder, doctor,*
Thou ask'st me such a question.— So Theobald and Walker. The original omits *do.*

P. 28. *I will* try *the forces*
Of these thy compounds on such creatures as
We count not worth the hanging,— but none human,—
To test *the vigour of them,* &c. — So Walker. Instead of *test,* the original repeats *try;* which is very awkward, to say the least.

P. 28. *Here comes a flattering rascal; upon him*
Will I first work: he's factor *for his master,*
And enemy to my son. — So Walker. The original is without *factor,* which is used in a later scene for *agent.* And some such insertion is plainly needful here both for sense and for metre. Where two consecutive words begin with the same or similar letters, one of them is very apt to be overlooked in transcribing or in printing.

P. 30. *Think what a chance thou* chancest *on.*— So Rowe, and Collier's second folio. The original has "thou *changest* on." Theobald reads "what a *change* thou *chancest* on."

ACT I., SCENE 6.

P. 31. *Had I been thief stol'n,*
As my two brothers, happy! Blest be those,
How mean soe'er, that have their honest wills;
Which seasons comfort: but most miserable
Is the desire *that's glorious.*— In the last of these lines, the original has *desires.* An obvious error; corrected in the second folio. I here adopt an important transportation proposed by Staunton. The old text defeats both metre and logical order by misplacement, thus:

> Had I been thief-stol'n,
> As my two brothers, happy! but most miserable
> Is the desire that's glorious: blest be those,
> How mean soe'er, that have their honest wills;
> Which seasons comfort.

P. 32. *Reflect upon him accordingly, as you value your* trust. — LEONATUS. — So the original, except that it lacks the dash after *trust.* Hanmer, and various others following him, read "your *truest* LEONATUS." The change is, I think, something worse than needless; as the letter is properly supposed to begin by introducing the bearer, and then to have the signature at the end. See foot-note 3.

P. 32. *What, are men mad? Hath Nature given them eyes*
To see this vaulted arch and the rich scope
Of sea and land, which can distinguish 'twixt
The fiery orbs above, and the twinn'd stones
Upon th' unnumber'd *beach?* — In the second of these lines, the original has *Crop* instead of *Scope.* I cannot imagine what *crop* should have to do there. Warburton and Collier's second folio substitute *cope;* but this makes an ugly tautology with *vaulted arch:* besides, it requires *Of* to be changed to *O'er.* — In the fifth line, also, the original reads "Upon *the number'd* beach." The reading in the text is Theobald's; and Collier's second folio has the same. See foot-note 4.

P. 33. *Sluttery, to such neat excellence opposed,*
Should make desire vomit from *emptiness.* — The original has "vomit emptinesse"; which Johnson explains "feel the convulsions of eructation without plenitude." The explanation, I think, only makes the absurdity of the old reading more glaring. Both sense and metre plead for the insertion of *from.* Capell reads "vomit *to* emptiness"; which gives a sense hardly strong enough for the place. See foot-note 6.

P. 34. *Not he: but yet Heaven's bounty towards him might*
Be used more thankfully: in himself, 'tis much;
In you, — which I 'count *his, — beyond all talents.* — The original reads "which I *account* his beyond all Talents." Pope and Capell read *count* instead of *account.* The pointing which I give in this passage is Staunton's. As commonly pointed, *beyond all talents* goes with *his;* here it falls into the same construction with *'tis much.* See footnote 13.

P. 35. *This object, which*
Takes prisoner the wild motion of mine eye,
Fixing *it only here.* — So the second folio. The first has *Fiering* instead of *Fixing.*

P. 35. *Then* lie *peeping in an eye*
Base and unlustrous *as the smoky light*, &c. — The original has *illustrious*, which some editors change to *illustrous*, supposing the prepositive *in* to be used privatively, as in *illiberal*, not intensively, as in *illustrious*. So explained, it seems a right good word, meaning, of course, the same as "*lack-lustre* eye." Nevertheless the best authorities are for printing *unlustrous*. — Instead of *lie peeping*, the original has *by peeping*, which some retain, printing it *by-peeping*, and explaining it *peeping in secret, on the sly*. Lettsom is sure that we ought to read *lie*, and produces several like instances of *lie* misprinted *by* in old writers. The change was proposed by Johnson.

P. 37. *Should he make me*
Lie, *like Diana's priest, betwixt cold sheets*, &c. — So Walker, and, as it seems to me, with evident propriety. The old text has *Live* instead of *Lie*. The two words were often confounded.

P. 38. *Such a holy witch,*
That he enchants societies unto *him;*
Half all men's *hearts are his*. — The original has *into* and *men* instead of *unto* and *men's*.

P. 38. *He sits 'mongst men like a* descended *god*. — So the second folio. The first has *defended*.

ACT II., SCENE I.

P. 41. 1 Lord. *You cannot derogate, my lord*. — So Johnson. The original gives this speech to the second Lord. As the question is asked of the first Lord, surely he should answer it. It is but just to add that in the original the speeches of the two lords have merely the prefixes "1." and "2."

ACT II., SCENE 2.

P. 43. *But my* design's
To note the chamber. I will write all down: &c. — So the third folio. The first has *designe*.

P. 44. *Why should I write this down that's* riveted,
Screw'd to my memory? — So the third folio. The first has *rivete*. The Cambridge Editors say that some copies of the first have *riveted*.

P. 44. *Swift, swift, you dragons of the night, that dawning*
May bare *the raven's eye!*—The original reads "May *beare* the Ravens eye." Probably a mere mis-spelling of *bare*. See foot-note 9.

ACT II., SCENE 3.

P. 46. *With every thing that pretty* is.—Hanmer, and some others after him, read "that pretty *bin*." Perhaps rightly; as we naturally expect a word to rhyme with *begin*. *Bin* is an old form of *be*.

P. 46. *If it do not, it is a* vice *in her ears, which horse-hairs and calves'-guts, nor the voice of unpaved eunuch to boot, can never* amend.—The original reads "a *voyce* in her ears"; a misprint occasioned, perhaps, by *voyce* in the next line. Corrected by Rowe. The original also has *amed* for *amend;* an obvious error, corrected in the second folio.

P. 47. *I have assail'd her with* music, &c.—The original has *musickes*. Corrected by Hanmer.

P. 47. *Frame yourself*
To orderly soliciting, *and be friended,* &c.—So Collier and the Cambridge Editors. Instead of *soliciting,* the original has *solicity,* which the second folio changes to *solicits*.

P. 48. *'Tis gold*
Which buys admittance; oft it doth; yea, makes
Diana's rangers false themselves, &c.—So Pope. The original reads "yea, *and* makes." Here *and* spoils the metre, and hurts the sense. Probably one of the words was written as a correction of the other, and both got printed together.

P. 49. *Fools* cure *not mad folks.*—So Theobald. The original reads "Fools *are* not mad folks." The use of *cures* in the third line after shows the change to be right. Cloten has just implied that his purpose is to cure Imogen of her imputed madness. She, in her reply, insinuates that he is a fool; and so he understands her. Her next reply is in accordance with this; meaning, "If you will desist from your folly in making suit to me, I will leave off being mad; that act of yours will cure us both."

P. 50. *And must not* soil
The precious note *of it with a base slave,* &c. — The original has *foyle* instead of *soil.* Corrected by Hanmer. *Note* seems a rather strange word for the place. Perhaps it should be *worth.*

P. 51. *In my respect than all the hairs* above *thee,*
Were they all made such men. — Ho, *now, Pisanio!* — The original has "*How* now Pisanio?" But Imogen is evidently calling Pisanio from another room, who accordingly enters directly upon the call; and *how now* was never used in that way. On the other hand, we have many instances of *ho* misprinted *how.* In a previous scene, Imogen repeatedly calls her man with "*What, hŏ,* Pisanio!" and so perhaps it should be here. — In the first line, Singer reads "all the hairs *about* thee." Literally, this seems an improvement; but the old reading means, of course, "all the hairs on thy head."

P. 51. His garment! *Now, the Devil—.* — The original has "garments" here, but "garment" rightly in the next speech but one. Corrected in the second folio.

ACT II., SCENE 4.

P. 52. *Quake in the present Winter's* state, *and wish*
That warmer days would come: in these sere hopes,
I barely gratify your love; &c. — In the first of these lines, Walker is confident that we ought to read *flaw* instead of *state,* which he calls an "unmeaning word." But why not understand *state* as equivalent to *time?* — In the second line, the original reads "these *fear'd hope.*" The second folio corrects *hope* to *hopes.* But what can *fear'd hopes* be? The word *sere* was often written *seare,* and is sometimes printed so in the originals of Shakespeare. See note on "Grown *sere* and tedious," vol. vi. page 254.

P. 53. *And you shall hear*
The legions *now in Gallia sooner landed,* &c. — So Theobald. The original has *Legion.* In a later scene, however, iii. 7, it has "the *Legions* now in Gallia."

P. 53. *Their discipline*
Now mingled *with their* courage *will make known,* &c. — The original reads "Now *wing-led* with their *courages.*" The latter cor-

rection is Dyce's, and has both sense and prosody in its favour. The second folio makes the other correction. It agrees well with the context, as it gives the idea that the Britons had *courage* before, and *discipline* has now been added to courage. But for this latter consideration I should certainly read *winged;* as it seems to me nothing could well be more in the Poet's style than the figure of courage adding wings to discipline.

P. 54. Phi. *Was Caius Lucius in the Britain Court*
When you were there?—This speech is given to Posthumus in the old copy; but Posthumus was employed in reading his letters, and was too much interested in them to put a question of this nature. Corrected by Capell.

P. 54. *If I* had *lost it,*
I should have lost the worth of it in gold.—The original reads "If I *have* lost it." A certain and obvious error.

P. 55. *Which I wonder'd*
Could be so rarely and exactly wrought,
Since the true life on't was —.—Capell reads "Since the true life *was in it.*" And Mason proposed "*Such* the true life on't was." The latter is exceedingly plausible, as *Such* might easily be misprinted *Since;* but the original has a long dash after *was,* showing the speech to be interrupted.

P. 57. *Who knows if one* o' *her women, being corrupted,*
Hath stol'n it from her?—The original has "one her women"; the second folio, "one *of* her women."

P. 58. *Under her breast*—
Worthy the *pressing*—*lies a mole,* &c.—The original has "Worthy *her* pressing." Corrected by Rowe.

ACT II., SCENE 5.

P. 59. *Is there no way for men to be, but women*
Must be half-workers? We are bastards all.—So Pope. The original reads "We are *all bastards.*" Walker approves of Capell's reading: "We are all bastards, *all.*"

P. 59. *Like a full-acorn'd boar, a* German one. — So Rowe. The original has "a *Jarmen on.*" We have many instances of *on* printed for *one,* the two words being formerly pronounced alike. See vol. i. page 176, note 1. — The misprint of *Jarman* for *German* occurs in The Second Part of *King Henry IV.*, ii. 1, quarto of 1600: "The *Jarman* hunting in waterworke." Some have wondered why Shakespeare should have specified a *German* boar. But it well appears that in some of the German forests the wild boars were specially noted for their size and rankness.

P. 60. *All faults that* may be named, *nay, that Hell knows.* — So the second folio. The first reads "All Faults that *name.*" Dyce proposes "All faults that *have a name*"; Walker, "All faults that *man can name.*"

ACT III., SCENE I.

P. 61. *With* rocks *unscaleable and roaring waters.* — The original has *Oakes* instead of *rocks.* Corrected by Hanmer.

P. 62. *Cæsar's ambition, —*
Which swell'd so much, that it did almost stretch
The *sides o' the world,* &c. — Mr. P. A. Daniel proposes "stretch *To th'* sides o' the world." Rightly, I suspect.

P. 62. *Which to shake off*
Becomes a warlike people, whom we reckon
Ourselves to be.
Clo. *We do.*
Cym. *Say, then, to Cæsar,* &c. — So Collier's second folio, and Dyce. The original prints *We do* as a part of Cymbeline's speech, giving the whole line thus: "Ourselves to be, we do. Say then to Cæsar." Modern editions detach *we do* from the first part of the line, and transfer it to the second, thus: "We do say, then, to Cæsar." The arrangement here adopted gives us a most characteristic piece of impertinent pertinence from Cloten, whose rickety mind keeps shaking out pithy comments on what the others say, throughout this scene.

P. 63. *I know your master's pleasure, and he mine:*
All the remain *is,* Welcome. — Mr. P. A. Daniel says, "Read 'All *that remains* is — *Welcome.*'" And so, probably, it ought to be.

ACT III., SCENE 2.

P. 64. *How! of adultery? Wherefore write you not*
What monster's her accuser? *Leonatus!* — So Capell, and rightly, beyond question. The original reads "What monsters her *accuse?*"

P. 65. *For it doth physic love, — of his content*
In all but *that!* — So Hanmer. The original reads "*All but in* that."

P. 65. "Justice, and your father's wrath, should he take me in his dominion, could not be so cruel to me, *but* you, O the dearest of creatures would even renew me with your eyes." — So Pope. The original reads *as* instead of *but;* which, it seems to me, quite defeats the passage of sense. Various other changes have been made or proposed; but Pope's is the simplest and best.

P. 66. *And for the gap*
That we shall make in time, from our hence-going
Till *our return, t' excuse: but first, how* to *get hence:* &c. — The original reads "how get hence." But, as *hence* is emphatic here, *to* seems fairly required; and *get* is evidently in the same construction with *excuse.* To be sure, the insertion of *to* makes the verse an Alexandrine; but the omission does not make it a pentameter. The omission was doubtless accidental. — The original also has *And* instead of *Till.* The correction is Pope's. *And* makes *from* equivalent to *between;* a sense, surely, which the word cannot bear. See note on "He cannot temperately transport his honours," &c., in *Coriolanus,* ii. 1.

P. 66. *How many* score *of miles may we well* ride
'Twixt hour and hour? — So the second folio. The first has *store* and *rid* for *score* and *ride.*

P. 67. Pis. *Madam, you're best consider.*
Imo. *I see before me, man: nor here, nor here,* &c. — Heath would read, and point, "I see before me, man? Nor here, nor *there,*" &c. And his explanation is as follows: "Wouldst thou, man, have me consider, and distract myself in the search of the consequences which

may possibly attend the step I am about to take? that would be to very little purpose indeed. For, whatever step I should take, whether I stay here, or go thither, the consequences which may attend either are all equally covered with such a thick mist of obscurity as it is impossible for me to penetrate; and, this being so, it would be folly in me to deliberate further on this subject." — I am not sure but Heath is right. See, however, foot-note 17.

ACT III., SCENE 3.

P. 67. Stoop, *boys: this gate*
Instructs you how t' adore the Heavens, and bows you
To morning's holy office. — The original has *sleepe* instead of *stoop*. Corrected by Hanmer. The original also reads "To *a* mornings holy office." Corrected by Walker. We have many instances of the same vile interpolation, equally against grammar, prosody, and sense.

P. 68. That *service is not service, so being done*, &c. — So Pope and Collier's second folio. The original has *This* instead of *That.*

P. 68. *Richer than doing nothing for a* bribe. — So Hanmer. The original has "nothing for a *Babe*." Various other changes have been made or proposed, such as *bauble*, *brabe*, and *bob;* but surely *bribe* is much the best, and is unreservedly approved by Walker. See foot-note 4.

P. 69. *Such gain the cap of him that makes* 'em *fine,*
Yet keep *his book uncross'd.* — The original has *him* instead of *'em;* but the use of *gain* shows that the pronoun should be plural. The original has *keepes* also instead of *keep*. But the sense clearly requires this word to be in the same construction with *gain.*

P. 69. *A prison* for *a debtor that not dares*, &c. — The original has *or* instead of *for*. Corrected by Pope.

P. 71. *And, though train'd up thus meanly,*
I' the cave wherein they *bow*, &c. — The original has "*whereon the* Bowe." Corrected by Warburton.

ACT III., SCENE 4.

P. 72. *Ne'er long'd my mother so*
To see me first, as I do *now.* — The original reads "as I *have* now." The correction is Mr. P. A. Daniel's.

P. 74. *Some jay of Italy,*
Whose mother was *her painting, hath betray'd him.* — It seems to me that a figure more in Shakespeare's style than this is hardly to be met with in the whole compass of his plays. Nevertheless some think the old reading should give place to *Who smothers her with painting,* which is found in Collier's second folio. Nothing short of a written order direct from the Poet himself would persuade me into such a substitution; and even then I should entreat him to reconsider, before he authorized the change. See foot-note 5.

P. 75. *And thou, Posthùmus,* thou *that didst set up*
My disobedience 'gainst the King my father,
And make *me put into contempt the suits*
Of princely fellows, &c. — In the first of these lines, the second *thou* is wanting in the old text. Inserted by Capell. In the third line, also, the original has *makes* instead of *make.* Malone's correction.

P. 76. *I'll wake mine eyeballs* blind *first.* — So Hanmer. The original lacks *blind.*

P. 77. *No Court, no father; nor no more ado*
With that harsh, noble, simple nothing, Cloten. — So Theobald. The original is without *Cloten.*

P. 77. Pis. *If not at Court,*
Then not in Britain must you bide.
Imo. What *then?*
Hath Britain all the Sun that shines? — The original has "*Where* then?" which is evidently wrong. Capell conjectured "*What* then?" which accords well with what follows.

P. 78. *I' the world's volùme,*
Our Britain seems as in *it, but not* of*'t;*
In a great pool a swan's nest. — The original reads "as *of* it,

but not *in*'t." The correction is Mr. P. A. Daniel's, and is fully warranted by the context. "To be in the world, but not of it" has long been a sort of proverbial phrase.

P. 78. *Now, if you could wear a* mind
Dark as your fortune is, and but disguise
That which, t' appear itself, must not yet be
But by self-danger, you should tread a course
Pretty and *full of view;* &c. — In the first of these lines, Warburton conjectured and Theobald printed "if you could wear a *mien*"; thus making it refer to the proposed concealment of Imogen's *person*, or to her *keeping dark* under a disguise. The change is at least plausible; but it renders the passage somewhat tautological, and defeats the better sense of carrying out the disguise of her person by disguising her character also. Accordingly, Pisanio presently advises her to assume strange manners as well as a strange dress. — In the fifth line, Collier's second folio reads "*Privy, yet* full of view." I think this change pleads strongly for admission. See, however, foot-note 16.

P. 80. *Which* you'll *make him know,*
If that his head have ear in music, &c. — The original has *will* instead of *you'll.* Hanmer's correction.

Act III., Scene 5.

P. 81. *So, sir, I desire of you*
A conduct overland to Milford-Haven.
All joy befall your Grace! — and, madam, *you!* — The original gives the last line thus: "*Madam*, all joy befall your Grace, and you." Editors have puzzled a good deal over this passage, and various changes have been proposed. Capell conjectured "*his* Grace and you," but printed "your Grace and *yours*." Mr. P. A. Daniel proposes "All joy befall your Grace! *Madam*, and you!" I have varied a little from this for metre's sake.

P. 82. *And there's no answer*
That will be given to th' loudest *noise we make.* — So Rowe. The original reads "given to th' *lowd of* noise, we make." Collier's second folio, "given to *the loud'st* noise."

P. 83. *Son*, — son, *I say, follow the King.* — So Walker. The original reads "Sonne, I say, follow the King." The repetition seems fairly required both for metre and for sense. The new turn in the situation casts Cloten into a fit of abstraction.

P. 84. *Close villain*, I
Will *have this secret from thy heart, or rip*, &c. — So Dyce. The original reads

Close villaine,
Ile have this Secret from thy heart, &c.

P. 87. *Thou bidd'st me to* thy *loss.* — So Collier's second folio. The original has "to *my* losse"; which seems to me little better than unmeaning here.

Act III., Scene 6.

P. 88. *Best draw my sword:* an *if mine enemy*
But fear the sword like me, he'll scarcely look on't. — The original has *and* instead of *an*. The old phrase *an if* is very often printed so.

P. 89. *I would have left it on the board so soon*
As I had made my meal, and parted so,
With prayers for the provider. — The original lacks the second *so*, which is Capell's insertion. Pope reads "and parted *thence.*"

P. 91. *I'd change my sex to be companion with them,*
Since Leonate is *false.* — The original lacks *is* and has *Leonatus*. Capell conjectured "Since *Leonate is* false." And I have no doubt that so we ought to read. The Poet shortens other names in the same way; as *Enobarb* for *Enobarbus*.

Act III., Scene 7.

P. 92. *And to you the tribunes*
For this immediate levy, he commends
His absolute commission. — So Theobald, adopting a conjecture of Warburton's. The old text has *commands* instead of *commends*. But, as Singer notes, "to *commend* was the old formula. We have it again in *King Lear:* 'I did *commend* your Highness' letters to them.' And in *All's Well:* '*Commend* the paper to his gracious hand.'" See, also, foot-note 17.

Act iv., Scene i.

P. 93. *Thy mistress enforced; thy garments cut to pieces before* her *face:* &c.—The original reads "before *thy* face." An accidental repetition, no doubt. Warburton's correction.

Act iv., Scene 2.

P. 94. As *much the quantity, the weight as much,*
As I do love my father.—So Heath and Capell. The original reads "*How* much the quantity."

P. 96. Imo. *Well or ill,*
I'm bound to you, and shall *be ever.*—So Warburton and Heath. The original, with *shalt* instead of *shall*, prints "and shall be ever" as part of the next speech.

P. 96. Gui. *But his neat cookery! he cut our roots*
In characters; and sauced our broths, &c.—The original prints this as two speeches, prefixing "Arvi." to all after *cookery!* But the whole was evidently meant to be one speech. Corrected by Capell.

P. 96. *I do note*
That grief and patience, rooted in him *both,* &c.—The original has "rooted in *them* both." Corrected by Pope.

P. 96. *Grow,* patience!
And let the stinking elder, grief, untwine
His perishing root with *the increasing vine!*—The original has *patient* instead of *patience.* Corrected by Theobald. Hanmer reads "*from* the increasing vine." I have little doubt that *from* is right. See foot-note 10.

P. 99. *For* the act *of judgment*
Is oft the cause of fear.—The original reads "for *defect* of judgment." This cannot be right; for Belarius evidently means that Cloten's want of judgment was the cause of his foolhardy courage. The Cambridge Editors think that something may have dropped out, and that "the original sentence may have been to the following purport: 'For defect of judgement supplies the place of courage, while

true judgement is oft the cause of fear.'" Hanmer reads "Is oft the *cure* of fear"; Theobald, "for *th' effect* of judgment." Either of these rectifies the logic fairly; though the first takes *cure* in the sense of *prevention;* while the other seems rather too much like Polonius's pedantic playing on *cause, effect,* and *defect; Hamlet,* ii. 2. The Poet often uses *act* in the sense here required. See foot-note 14.

P. 99. *Displace our heads where* — thank *the gods! — they grow,* &c. — The original has *thanks.* Corrected by Steevens.

P. 100. *Though his* humour
Was nothing but mutation, &c. — The original has *Honor.* Corrected by Theobald. The error occurs repeatedly.

P. 101. *Thou divine Nature,* how *thyself thou blazon'st*
In these two princely boys! — The original has *thou* instead of *how.* Corrected by Pope.

P. 101. *'Tis* wonderful
That an invisible instinct should frame them, &c. — So Pope and Walker. The old text has *wonder* instead of *wonderful.*

P. 102. *My* ingenious *instrument!* — The original has *ingenuous.* Corrected by Rowe.

P. 102. *O melancholy!*
Who ever yet could sound thy bottom, find
Thy *ooze?* or *show what coast thy sluggish* crare
Might *easiliest harbour in?* — The original reads "*The* Ooze, *to* shew what coast thy sluggish *care Might'st* easilest harbour in." The second folio corrects *Might'st* to *Might.* The correction of *care* to *crare* was proposed by Sympson in a note on a passage in Fletcher's *Captain:* "Let him venture in some decayed *crare* of his own." Capell proposed to substitute *or* for *to.* I believe all the editors hitherto have retained "*The* ooze"; which makes me almost afraid to trust my own judgment in the change: but, surely, "sound thy bottom" and "find the ooze" both refer to the same thing, and are indeed meant as equivalent expressions.

P. 103. *Jove knows what man thou mightst have made; but* ah,
Thou diedst, &c. — So Rowe. The original has *I* instead of *ah.* *I, ah,* and *ay* were often confounded; in fact, *I* was sometimes understood to do service for all three.

P. 104. *Thou shalt not lack*
The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose; nor
The azure *harebell, like thy veins; no, nor*
The leaf of eglantine, who, *not to slander,*
Out-sweeten'd not thy breath. — In the second of these lines, the original has *azur'd* for *azure;* in the third, *whom* instead of *who.* Collier's second folio reads "The *leafy* eglantine." This is at least plausible, as the speaker is making special mention of *flowers;* but he probably means the sweet-briar, or *rosa rubiginosa,* which is noted for the *fragrance of its leaves.*

P. 104. *Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,*
*To winter-*guard *thy corse.* — So Collier's second folio. The original has "winter-*ground.*" This phrase does not tell its own meaning; and, as it is not met with elsewhere, we have no means of explaining it. Two other good corrections have been proposed, "winter-*gown,*" by Warburton, and "winter-*green,*" by Verplanck. I find it not easy to choose between the three. Walker strongly approves of *winter-gown.*

P. 105. *Sing him to th' ground,*
As once our mother; &c. — The original reads "As once *to* our Mother."

P. 105. *And, though he came our enemy, remember*
He's *paid for that.* — The original has "He *was* paid for that."

P. 106. "Fear no more the heat o' the Sun, &c." — It is doubtful, to say the least, whether these stanzas were written by Shakespeare; and it is pretty certain, as will be noted hereafter, that some things in this play were *not* written by him. The previous arrangement was, "Use like note and words, save that Euriphile must be Fidele"; yet no name is met with in the dirge: which looks as if either the Poet forgot that arrangement or else the stanzas were furnished by another hand. Yet I can hardly doubt that they were written with a special view to the use here made of them. White indeed thinks the song quite out of keeping with the time and place; remarking that "it could hardly be at once tamer, more pretentious, and less suited to the characters." But I cannot see it so: on the contrary, I have to confess that, though perhaps more from long association than from judgment, the lines *feel* to me very much at home where they are, and fall in accordantly

enough with the spirit of the persons and the occasion. Still I do not think them Shakespeare's, nor will I venture to guess who else may have written them. Staunton notes upon the matter as follows: "There is something so strikingly inferior, both in the thoughts and expression of the concluding couplet to each stanza of this song, that we may fairly set them down as additions from the same hand which furnished the contemptible *Masque* or *Vision* that deforms the last Act."

P. 107. *Upon* Earth's face
You were as flowers; now wither'd: even so
These herblets shall, which we upon you strow.—The old text reads "upon *their Faces.*" As there is but one *face*, Cloten's having gone its way with the message to the fishes, editors have commonly attributed an oversight to the Poet. The reading here given is Staunton's.

P. 107. *Their pleasures here are past, so* is *their pain.*—The original has "so *are* their *paine.*" Corrected by Pope.

P. 108. *Pisanio might have kill'd thee at the heart,*
And left thy *head on.*—*How should this be?*—The original reads "left *this* head on." Corrected by Hanmer.

P. 109. *This is Pisanio's deed and* Cloten's.—The original has *Cloten.* Pope's correction.

P. 109. *Attending*
You here at Milford-Haven with your ships,
They are in readiness.—The original has "They are *heere* in readinesse." Doubtless an accidental repetition from the line above. Corrected in the second folio.

P. 110. *There* is *no more such masters: I may wander*
From East to Occident, cry out for service,
Try many, and *all good, serve truly,* &c.—In the first of these lines, the second folio has "There *are* no more," &c.—Also, in the third line, *and*, wanting in the old text, was inserted by Johnson.

ACT IV., SCENE 3.

P. 112. *A fever with the absence of her son;*
Madness, of which her life's in danger. — The original has "*A* madnesse." Walker says, "Wrong surely; the latter *A* originating in the former." Pope reads as in the text.

P. 112. *But for thee,* thee, *fellow,*
Who needs must know of her departure, &c. — So Capell and Walker. The original reads "But for thee, Fellow," &c.

P. 112. *There wants no diligence in seeking him,*
And he'll, *no doubt, be found.* — So Capell. The original has "And *will* no doubt be found."

P. 113. I've had *no letter from my master since*
I wrote him Imogen was slain. — So Hanmer. The original reads "I *heard* no Letter," &c.; which is neither English nor sense.

ACT IV., SCENE 4.

P. 114. *What pleasure, sir,* find we *in life,* &c. — So the second folio. The first has "*we finde* in life."

P. 115. *It is not likely*
That when they hear the *Roman horses neigh,*
Behold their quarter'd fires, &c. — The original has "heare *their* Roman horses neigh." Probably an accidental repetition from the line below. Corrected by Rowe.

ACT V., SCENE 1.

P. 116. *Yea, bloody cloth, I'll keep thee; for I wish'd*
Thou shouldst be colour'd thus. — The original reads "for I *am* wisht." Corrected by Pope.

P. 117. *You some permit*
To second ills with ills, each elder worse,
And make them dreaded *to the doer's thrift.* — The original has *dread it* instead of *dreaded,* which is Theobald's correction. —

Singer substitutes *shrift* for *thrift;* and from the way he speaks of the old reading one would think the idea had never occurred to him, of men's thriving in this world by wrong, and achieving the larger success for being reckless how they succeed. As here given, the passage, though highly condensed, yields a just and fitting sense, and one which is not seldom exemplified among men. See foot-note 5.

ACT V., SCENE 3.

P. 120. "Or we are Romans, and will give you that
Like beasts which you shun beastly, and may *'scape*
But to look back in frown." — The original has *save* instead of *'scape.* As the meaning evidently is, "we will give you *the death* which you shun in a beastly manner, and which you may —," &c.; surely there can be no doubt that we should read *'scape.* "To *save* one's *life*" is good sense; but who ever heard such a phrase as "to *save* one's *death*"?

P. 121. *Forthwith they fly*
Chickens, the way which they stoop'd *eagles; slaves,*
The strides they *victors made.* — The original reads "they *stopt* Eagles," and "The strides *the* Victors made." The first was corrected by Rowe, the other by Theobald.

P. 123. *A* lag *of Rome shall not return to tell,* &c. — The original has "A *legge* of Rome." The correction is Mr. P. A. Daniel's; who aptly quotes from *Timon of Athens,* iii. 6, "the common *legge* of people," and adds as follows: "In this instance Rowe — followed, I believe, by all the editors — changes the word *legge* to *lag.*" In that passage, however, I read *tag,* from Collier's second folio; but that is nothing against *lag* here. Of course *lag* is the same as *lag-end,* — a phrase used several times by Shakespeare.

ACT V., SCENE 4.

P. 123. *So graze as you find pasture.*
2 Jail. *Ay, or stomach.* — The original has "or *a* stomacke." Another instance of *a* vilely interpolated. See page 164; note on "Stoop, boys:" &c.

P. 125. *And so, great powers,*
If you will make *this audit, take* my *life,*
And cancel these cold bonds.— The original reads "If you will *take* this audit, take *this* life." The corrections are Mr. P. A. Daniel's. Walker notes the first *take* as suspicious; and it is remarkable that in the original we have no less than six *takes* in the compass of twelve lines. It is worth something to get rid of one of them; and in this place *make* does just as well for the sense.

P. 125. "Solemn Music. Enter, as an Apparition," &c. — This stage-direction, together with all the following matter down to the re-entrance of the first Jailer, is such a piece of dull impertinence as, most assuredly, Shakespeare could never have written. In style, cast of language, and versification, it is utterly unlike the rest of the play, or indeed any thing else that came from his hand. Still I am inclined to think that it was supplied by some other hand at the time, and that the Poet himself worked it in with his own noble matter. For the "label" is perhaps the absurdest and most un-Shakespearian part of the whole; yet the contents of it are, by the still more absurd interpretation of them at the close, so wrought into the dialogue as to make the "label" itself an inseparable item of the drama. As to the dialogue that follows, between Posthumus and the Jailer, I am not so clear; though that too might be spared without any detriment to the action. See the preface, page 6.

P. 127. *For this, from stiller seats we* come. — So Dyce. The original has *came;* an error which the context readily corrects.

P. 127. *Thy crystal window ope; look out.* — So the second folio. The first has "looke, *looke* out."

P. 130. *Of this contradiction you shall now be quit. O, the charity of a penny cord!* — The original reads "*Oh,* of this contradiction you shall now be quit; Oh, the charity," &c. We have many instances of such repetition by a sort of anticipation; that is, a later word catching the transcriber's or compositor's eye, and so creeping in out of place.

P. 131. *You must either be directed by some that take upon them to know, or take upon yourself that which,* &c. — The original reads "or *to* take upon your selfe." Evidently an accidental repetition of *to.*

Act v., Scene 5.

P. 134. *By watching, weeping, tendance, kissing, to*
O'ercome you with her show; and so *in time,*
When she had fit *you with her craft, to work*, &c. — The original lacks *so* in the second line, and has *fitted* in the third. In the former case, the second folio ekes out the verse awkwardly thus, — "*yes*, and in time." The present reading was proposed by Jervis. The other correction is Walker's. See page 79, note 20.

P. 134. *Mine ears, that* heard *her flattery;* &c. — The original has *heare* instead of *heard.* Corrected in the second folio.

P. 135. *Boy, thou hast look'd thyself into my grace,*
And art mine own. I know not why nor *wherefore*
To say, &c. — The original omits *nor* in the second line. Inserted by Rowe.

P. 136. Bel. *Is not this boy revived from death?*
Arv. *One sand another*
Not more resembles: that sweet rosy lad
Who died, and was Fidele. — What think you?
Gui. *The same dead thing alive.* — In the original, the second of these speeches reads "One sand another Not more resembles that sweet rosy lad," &c. This has vastly puzzled some of the editors. But, as Johnson saw, the passage is elliptical, and the sense is evidently completed at *resembles.* Then the meaning comes, "*he is* that sweet rosy lad." I cannot conceive what Dyce and the Cambridge Editors mean by printing "Not more resembles that sweet," &c.; which is neither English nor sense; nor can any violence of interpretation make it so. We have a parallel case in *King Lear.* See note on "You have seen sunshine and rain at once," &c., vol. xv. page 173.

P. 137. *But we* saw *him dead.* — The original has *see* instead of *saw.* Corrected by Rowe.

P. 137. 'Twould *torture me to leave unspoken that*
Which, to be spoke, would torture thee. — The original has "*Thou'lt* torture me to leave," &c. But the use of *would* in the next

line declares strongly for the same word here. And Dyce's explanation of the old reading is, I think, enough to condemn it: "Instead of torturing me to speak, thou wouldst (if thou wert wise, or aware) torture me to prevent my speaking," &c. Iachimo's next speech shows his meaning here to be, that it torments him not to speak the truth in question.

P. 137. *I'm glad to be constrain'd to utter that*
Torments me to conceal. — The original reads "utter that *Which* torments me," thus spoiling the metre of the next line. Perhaps we ought to make the latter an Alexandrine, "utter that Which *it* torments me," &c. But the old poets, Shakespeare especially, often use *that* as equivalent to the compound relative *what.* So that *which,* in this case, is probably an interpolation.

P. 140. *This her bracelet,* —
O cunning, how I got it! — *nay, some marks,* &c. — The original omits *it.* Corrected in the second folio.

P. 140. Ah *me, most credulous fool,*
Egregious murderer, thief, any thing
That's due to all the villains past, in being,
To come! O, give me cord, or knife, or poison,
Some upright justicer! — *Thou, King,* &c. — Here Staunton proposes a reading which may be worth considering:

> *Give* me — most credulous fool,
> Egregious murderer, thief — any thing
> That's due to all the villains past, in being, *or*
> To come, — O, give me cord, or knife, or poison,
> Some upright justicer!

P. 141. *O, gentlemen, help,* help!
Mine and your mistress! — So Capell. The second *help* is not in the original. Both sense and metre call for it.

P. 144. *I'm* sorry *for thee:*
By thine own tongue thou art condemn'd, &c. — So the second folio. The first has *sorrow* instead of *sorry.*

P. 144. *This man is better than the man he slew;*
As well descended as thyself; and hath
More of thee merited than a band of Clotens
Had ever scorse *for.*—The original reads "Had ever *scarre* for"; which is commonly printed "Had ever *scar* for." But *scar*, in any sense known to us, can have no possible fitness here. Doubtless *scarre* is a misprint for *scorse*, which was a rare word, and going out of use at the time. See note on "Let Paris bleed"; &c., and the reference there, vol xvi. page 339.

P. 146. *Your pleasure was my* mere *offence*, &c.—The original has "my *neere* offence." The correction is Tyrwhitt's.

P. 147. *O, what! am I*
A mother to the birth of three? Ne'er mother
Rejoiced deliverance more.—*Blest* may *you be*, &c.—The original has "*pray* you be." A very easy misprint; corrected by Rowe.—Hanmer punctuates the first sentence thus: "O what am I? A mother to the birth of three!" And so Walker thinks it should be.

P. 148. *You call'd me brother,*
When I was but your sister; I you brothers,
When ye *were so indeed.*—The original has *we* instead of *ye*. Corrected by Rowe.

P. 148. *How parted with your* brothers? *how first met them?* &c.—The original has *Brother;* an error which *them* corrects.

P. 149. *The forlorn soldier that* so *nobly fought*, &c.—So the second folio. The first has *no* instead of *so*.

P. 149. *I am, sir* King,
The soldier that did company these three
In poor beseeming.—The original lacks *King*, and so makes an ugly gap in the metre. Pope, to fill up the verse, reads "'*Tis* I am, sir," &c. Keightley reads "I am, *great* sir," &c. The reading in the text was proposed anonymously. The phrase "sir King" occurs earlier in this scene.

P. 151. *Which* mulier *I divine*
Is thy *most constant wife ;* &c. — The original has *this* instead of *thy*. The latter is plainly required by the context. Corrected by Capell.

P. 151. By *peace we will begin.* — So Hanmer. The original reads "*My* peace"; which surely cannot be right: if any pronoun were used, it should evidently be *Our*. *My* and *we* do not harmonize. On the other hand, "we will begin by peace," or *with* peace, is a fitting response to the Soothsayer's prediction of "peace and plenty."

P. 151. *Ere the stroke*
Of this yet *scarce-cold battle,* &c. — The original reads "Of *yet this* scarse-cold." Corrected in the third folio.

CORIOLANUS.

FIRST printed in the folio of 1623, and one of the worst specimens of printing in that volume. The text as there delivered abounds in palpable corruptions: critical sagacity and ingenuity have done their utmost, apparently, towards rectifying the numerous errors; still there are some passages that seem too much for corrective art.

The tragedy is not heard of at all through any notice or allusion made during the author's life: in fact, we have no contemporary note of reference to it whatever, save in an elegy on Richard Burbage,* where we learn that the hero's part was sustained by that celebrated actor. So that we are left without any external evidence as to the date of the writing. Nor does the piece itself contain a traceable vestige of allusion to any known contemporary events; such, for instance, as that to the new creation of baronets in *Othello*. Our only argument, therefore, as regards the time of composition lies in marks of style, use of language, and complexion of imagery and thought; in all which respects it clearly falls among the very latest of the Poet's writing. Certainly no play of the series surpasses it, and very few, if any, equal it, in boldness of metaphor, in autocratic prerogative of expression, or in passages marked by an overcrowding of matter or an overcompression of language. The strength of civil wisdom, also, the searching anatomy of public characters and motives, the wide and firm grasp of social and political questions, in short, the whole moral and intellectual climate of the piece, — all concur with the former notes in marking it off to the Poet's highest maturity of thought and power. There-

* Burbage died in 1619, and a copy of an elegy written upon that occasion was discovered some years ago among Mr. Heber's manuscripts. See vol. xvii. page 156.

withal I hold it to be among his greatest triumphs in organization: I cannot point out, I believe no one has pointed out, a single instance where the parts might have been better ordered for the proper effect of the whole; while the interest never once flags or falters, nor suffers any break or diversion, from the beginning to the end: rather say, it holds on with ever-increasing force throughout, and draws all the details into its current; so that the unity of impression is literally perfect. In this great point of dramatic architecture, I think it bears the palm clean away from both the other Roman tragedies; and indeed I am not sure but it should be set down as the peer of *Othello*.

In this, as in the other Roman plays, the historical matter was drawn from Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch. The events of the drama as related in the old Greek's *Life of Coriolanus* extend over a period of about four years, from the popular secession to the Sacred Mount, B.C. 494, to the hero's death, B.C. 490. The capture of Corioli is now reckoned to the year B.C. 493.

The severity of criticism applied in recent times has made rather sweeping work with the dim heroic traditions of old Rome; insomuch that the story of Coriolanus has now come to be generally regarded as among the most beautiful of the early Roman legends. Shakespeare, however, was content to take the rambling and credulous, but lively and graphic narratives of Plutarch as veritable and authentic history.

The Coriolanus of Plutarch offered the Poet a capital basis for the construction of a great dramatic hero. Hardly any other passage indeed of Roman history could furnish so grand and inviting a theme for personal delineation. The main outlines of the man's character, and also the principal actions ascribed to him, are copied faithfully from the historian; while those outlines are filled up and finished with a wealth of invention and a depth of judgment which the Poet has perhaps nowhere surpassed. The proportions are indeed gigantic, not to say superhuman; so much so, that the boldest of delineators might well have scrupled such a portrait, but that he had so strong a warrant of historic faith to bear him out. The other personal figures, also, with the one exception of Menenius Agrippa, were

in like sort derived from the same time-honoured repository. And the point most worth noting is, that from the parts and fragments thence derived, rich and fresh as these often are, the Poet should have reproduced, as it were, the entire form and order of their being, creating an atmosphere and environing which so fit and cohere with what he borrowed, that the whole has the air and movement of an original work. For it may be observed that all the humorous and amusing scenes — and Shakespeare has few that are more choicely conceived or more aptly used — are supplied from the Poet's own mind; there being no hint towards these in Plutarch, except the fable rehearsed and applied by old Menenius, who is merely described as one of "the pleasantest old men, and the most acceptable to the people." And yet how exquisite the keeping of these scenes with the other matter of the play! and how perfectly steeped they seem to be in the very genius and spirit of the old Roman life and manners!

Nor does the Poet's borrowing in this case stop with incidents or with lines of character: it extends to the very words and sentences of the old translator, and this sometimes for a considerable space together. In illustration of this, I copy, with slight abridgment, the passage describing the flight of Coriolanus to Antium, and his reception by Aufidius:

"It was even twilight when he entered the city, and many people met him in the streets, but no man knew him. So he went immediately to Tullus Aufidius' house, and when he came thither he got him up straight to the chimney-hearth, and sat him down, and spake not a word, his face all muffled over. They of the house spying him wondered what he should be, yet they durst not bid him rise: for, disguised as he was, yet there appeared a certain majesty in his countenance and in his silence; whereupon they went to Tullus who was at supper, to tell him of the strange disguising of this man. Tullus rose presently from the board, and coming towards him asked who he was, and wherefore he came. Then Marcius unmuffled himself, and, after he had paused awhile, said, 'If thou knowest me not yet, Tullus, and seeing me dost not believe me to be the man I am indeed, I must of necessity bewray myself to be that I am. I am CAIUS MARCIUS, who hath done to thyself particularly, and

to all the Volsces generally, great hurt and mischief, which I cannot deny for my surname CORIOLANUS that I bear. For I never had other benefit of the painful service I have done, and the extreme dangers I have been in, but this surname; — a good memory and witness of the malice and displeasure thou shouldst bear me. Indeed the name only remaineth with me: for the rest the envy and cruelty of the people of Rome have taken from me, by the sufferance of the dastardly Nobility and magistrates, who have forsaken me, and let me be banished by the people. This extremity hath now driven me to come as a poor suitor, to take thy chimney-hearth: not of any hope I have to save my life thereby; for if I had feared death, I would not have come hither to put myself in hazard; but pricked forward with desire to be revenged of them that thus have banished me; which now I do begin, in putting my person into the hands of their enemies. Wherefore, if thou hast any heart to be wreaked of the injuries thy enemies have done thee, speed thee now, and let my misery serve thy turn, and so use it, that my services may be a benefit to the Volsces; promising thee that I will fight with better will for you than I did when I was against you; knowing that they fight more valiantly who know the force of the enemy than such as have never proved it. But if it be so that thou dare not, and art weary to prove fortune any more, then am I also weary to live any longer. And it were no wisdom in thee to save the life of him who hath been heretofore thy mortal enemy, and whose service now can nothing help nor pleasure thee.' Tullus, hearing what he said, was a marvellous glad man, and, taking him by the hand, said unto him, 'Stand up, O Marcius, and be of good cheer; for in proffering thyself unto us thou doest us great honour; and by this means thou mayest hope also of greater things at all the Volsces' hands.' So he feasted him for that time, and entertained him in the honourablest manner he could, talking with him of no other matter at that present; but within a few days they fell to consultation in what sort they should begin their wars."

To this I must add the still more remarkable passage relating the visit of the Roman ladies to the enemy's camp, and the interview between Volumnia and her son:

"Now was Marcius set in his chair of state, and when he spied the women coming afar off he marvelled what it meant; but afterwards, knowing his wife, who came foremost, he determined at the first to persist in his rancour. But in the end, being altered to see them, his heart would not serve him to tarry their coming to his chair; but, coming down in haste, he went to meet them, and first he kissed his mother and embraced her awhile, then his wife and little children. And nature so wrought in him, that the tears fell from his eyes, and he could not keep himself from making much of them. Then, perceiving that his mother would speak, he called the chiefest of the Volsces to hear what she would say. Then she spake in this sort:

"'If we held our peace, my son, and determined not to speak, the state of our poor bodies and present sight of our raiment would easily bewray to thee what life we have led at home since thy exile: but think now with thyself how much more unfortunate than all the women living we are come hither, considering that the sight which should be most pleasant to behold, spiteful fortune hath made most fearful to us; making myself to see my son, and my daughter here her husband, besieging the walls of his native country; so as that which is the only comfort to all others in their adversity, to pray unto the gods and to call to them for aid, is the thing which plungeth us in most deep perplexity. For we cannot, alas! together pray both for victory to our country and for safety of thy life; but a world of grievous curses, yea, more than any mortal enemy can heap upon us, are forcibly wrapped up in our prayers. For the bitter sop of most hard choice is offered thy wife and children either to lose the person of thyself or the nurse of their native country. For myself, my son, I am determined not to tarry till fortune in my lifetime do make an end of this war; for, if I cannot persuade thee rather to do good unto both parties than to overthrow and destroy the one, trust unto it, thou shalt no sooner march forward to assault thy country, but thy foot shall tread upon thy mother's womb, that brought thee first into this world. And I may not defer to see the day, either that my son be led prisoner in triumph by his natural countrymen or that he himself do triumph of them. If it were so that my request tended to save thy coun-

try in destroying the Volsces, I must confess thou wouldest hardly resolve on that: for as to destroy thy country is altogether unmeet and unlawful; so were it not just, and less honourable, to betray those that put their trust in thee. But my only demand consisteth to make a jail-delivery of all evils, which delivereth equal benefit and safety to both, but most honourable to the Volsces. For it shall appear that, having victory in their hands, they have granted us singular graces, peace and amity; of which good, if so it come to pass, thyself is the only author, and so hast thou the honour. But, if it fail, thyself alone shall carry the shameful reproach of either party. So, though the end of war be uncertain, yet this is most certain, — that, if it be thy chance to conquer, this benefit shalt thou reap of thy goodly conquest, to be chronicled the plague and destroyer of thy country. And if fortune overthrow thee, then the world will say, that through desire to revenge thy private injuries thou hast for ever undone thy friends who did most lovingly receive thee. — My son, why dost thou not answer me? Dost thou take it honourable for a noble man to remember the wrongs and injuries done him, and dost not think it an honest man's part to be thankful for the goodness that parents do show to their children? No man living is more bound to show himself thankful in all parts and respects than thyself. Thou hast not hitherto showed thy poor mother any courtesy, and therefore it is not only honest, but due unto me, that I should obtain my so just and reasonable request of thee. But since by reason I cannot persuade thee, to what purpose do I defer my last hope?'

"With these words, herself, his wife, and children fell down upon their knees before him. Marcius seeing that could refrain no longer, but went straight and lift her up, crying out, 'O mother, what have you done to me?' And, holding her hard by the right hand, 'O mother,' said he, 'you have won a happy victory for your country, but mortal and unhappy for your son; for I see myself vanquished by you alone.' These words being spoken openly, he spake a little apart with his mother and wife, and then let them return to Rome, for so they did request him; and so, remaining in the camp that night, the next morning he dislodged, and marched into the Volsces' country again."

CORIOLANUS.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS.
YOUNG MARCIUS, his Son.
MENENIUS AGRIPPA, his Friend.
TITUS LARTIUS, } Generals against
COMINIUS, } the Volscians.
SICINIUS VELUTUS, } Tribunes of the
JUNIUS BRUTUS, } People.
A Roman Herald.
TULLUS AUFIDIUS, General of the Volscians.
Lieutenant to Aufidius.
Conspirators with Aufidius.
A Citizen of Antium.
Two Volscian Guards.

VOLUMNIA, Mother to Coriolanus.
VIRGILIA, Wife to Coriolanus.
VALERIA, Friend to Virgilia.
Gentlewoman attending Virgilia.

Roman and Volscian Senators, Patricians, Ædiles, Lictors, Soldiers, Citizens, Messengers, Servants to Aufidius, and other Attendants.

SCENE.—*Partly in Rome and its neighbourhood; partly in the Territories of the Volscians and Antiates.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Rome. A Street.*

Enter a Company of mutinous Citizens, *with staves, clubs, and other weapons.*

1 Cit. Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

Citizens. Speak, speak.

1 Cit. You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

Citizens. Resolved, resolved.

1 Cit. First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

Citizens. We know't, we know't.

1 Cit. Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict?

Citizens. No more talking on't; let it be done: away, away!

2 Cit. One word, good citizens.

1 Cit. We are accounted poor citizens; the patricians, good.[1] What authority surfeits on would relieve us: if they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear: the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery,[2] is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes:[3] for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

2 Cit. Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

1 Cit. Against him first: he's a very dog to the commonalty.

2 Cit. Consider you what services he has done for his country?

1 Cit. Very well; and could be content to give him good report for't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

2 Cit. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

1 Cit. I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end: though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his

[1] *Good* seems to be here used in a double sense, one of them being the commercial; as by Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice:* "My meaning, in saying he is a *good* man, is to have you understand me, that he is sufficient."

[2] Meaning, apparently, the *sight* or *spectacle* of their misery; their *leanness* was the *object* that served, by comparison, to remind the Patricians of their own abundance; and so the sufferings of the Plebs were a gain to them.

[3] "As lean as a *rake*" was an ancient proverb; *rake* being from *rache,* which signifies a *greyhound. Pike* or *pikefork* is also an old word for *pitchfork.* Of course a quibble is intended on *rake.*

mother, and partly to be proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

2 Cit. What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous.

1 Cit. If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations; he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these? The other side o' the city is risen: why stay we prating here? to the Capitol!

Citizens. Come, come.

1 Cit. Soft! who comes here?

2 Cit. Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that hath always loved the people.

1 Cit. He's one honest enough: would all the rest were so!

Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA.

Men. What work's, my countrymen, in hand? where go you
With bats and clubs? the matter? speak, I pray you.

1 Cit. Our business is not unknown to the Senate; they have had inkling, this fortnight, what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths: they shall know we have strong arms too.

Men. Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours,
Will you undo yourselves?

1 Cit. We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

Men. I tell you, friends, most charitable care
Have the patricians of you. For your wants,
Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well
Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them
Against the Roman State; whose course will on
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs
Of more strong link asunder than can ever

If you'll bestow a small — o: what you've little —
Patience awhile, you'll hear the belly's answer.
1 Cit. Ye're long about it.
Men. Note me this, good friend;
Your most grave belly was deliberate,
Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd:
True is it, my incorporate friends, quoth he,
That I receive the general food at first,.
Which you do live upon; and fit it is,
Because I am the store-house and the shop
Of the whole body: but, if you do remember,
I send it through the rivers of your blood,
Even to the Court, the heart, to th' seat o' the brain;[8]
And, through the cranks and offices[9] *of man,*
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
From me receive that natural competency
Whereby they live: and though that all at once,
You, my good friends, — this says the belly, mark me, —
1 Cit. Ay, sir; well, well.
Men. *Though all at once cannot*
See what I do deliver out to each,
Yet I can make my audit up, that all
From me do back receive the flour of all,
And leave me but the bran. What say you to't?[10]

[8] According to the old philosophy, the heart was the seat of the understanding; hence it is here called "the Court." So in a previous speech: "The counsellor heart."

[9] *Cranks* are *windings;* the meandering ducts of the human body. — *Offices* was used for *rooms* or *apartments*, and such is its meaning here. — The words *nerve*, *vein*, *artery*, and *sinew* are used very loosely, almost indiscriminately indeed, by Shakespeare: in fact they had not then got differentiated to their present use.

[10] The fable of *The Belly and the Members* has been traced far back in antiquity. It is found in several ancient collections of Æsopian fables; so that there is as much reason for making Æsop the author of this as of many others that go in his name. Shakespeare was acquainted with a very spirited

1 Cit. It was an answer: how apply you this?
Men. The Senators of Rome are this good belly,
And you the mutinous members: for, examine
Their counsels and their cares; digest things rightly
Touching the weal o' the common; you shall find,
No public benefit which you receive
But it proceeds or comes from them to you,
And no way from yourselves. — What do you think,
You, the great toe of this assembly?
1 Cit. I the great toe! why the great toe?
Men. For that, being one o' the lowest, basest, poorest,
Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost:
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,[11]
Lead'st first to win some vantage. —
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;
The one side must have bale.[12] —

Enter CAIUS MARCIUS.

Hail, noble Marcius!
Mar. Thanks. — What's the matter, you dissentious rogues,
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourselves scabs?
1 Cit. We have ever your good word.
Mar. He that will give good words to ye will flatter
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,

version of it in Camden's *Remains;* but he was chiefly indebted for the matter to North's Plutarch.

11 *Rascal* and *in blood* are terms of the forest, both here used equivocally. The meaning seems to be, "thou worthless scoundrel, though thou art in the worst plight for running of all this herd of plebeians, like a deer not *in blood*, thou takest the lead in this tumult in order to obtain some private advantage to thyself." "Worst in blood" has a secondary meaning of *lowest in condition.*

12 *Bale* is *evil* or *mischief.* The word is pure Saxon, and was becoming obsolete in Shakespeare's time.

That like nor peace nor war? the one affrights you,
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese: you are no surer, no,
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is,
To make him worthy whose offence subdues him,
And curse that justice did it.[13] Who deserves greatness
Deserves your hate; and your affections are
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that
Which would increase his evil. He that depends
Upon your favours swims with fins of lead,
And hews down oaks with rushes. Trust ye? Hang ye!
With every minute you do change your mind;
And call him noble that was now your hate,
Him vile that was your garland. What's the matter,
That in these several places of the city
You cry against the noble Senate, who,
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another?—What's their seeking?

Men. For corn at their own rates; whereof, they say,
The city is well stored.

Mar. Hang 'em! They say!
They'll sit by th' fire,[14] and presume to know
What's done i' the Capitol; who's like to rise,
Who thrives, and who declines; side factions, and give out
Conjectural marriages; making parties strong,
And feebling such as stand not in their liking
Below their cobbled shoes. They say there's grain enough!

[13] "Your virtue is to speak well of him whom his own offences have subjected to justice; and to rail at those laws by which he was punished."

[14] *Fire* is here a dissyllable. This and many other words, such as *hour*, *power*, *given*, &c., are used by the Poet as one or two syllables indifferently, to suit the metre.

Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,[15]
And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry [13]
With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high
As I could pick [17] my lance.

Men. Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded;
For though abundantly they lack discretion,
Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech you,
What says the other troop?

Mar. They are dissolved: hang 'em!
They said they were an-hungry; sigh'd forth proverbs,
That hunger broke stone walls; that dogs must eat;
That meat was made for mouths; that the gods sent not
Corn for the rich men only: with these shreds
They vented their complainings; which being answer'd,
And a petition granted them, a strange one, —
To break the heart of generosity,[18]
And make bold power look pale, — they threw their caps
As they would hang them on the horns o' the Moon,
Shouting their emulation.[19]

Men. What is granted them?

Mar. Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
Of their own choice: one's Junius Brutus, one
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not — 'Sdeath! [20]
The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,
Ere so prevail'd with me: it will in time

15 *Ruth* is *pity* or *compassion:* a word little used now, but its sense survives in *ruthless.*

16 *Quarry*, or *querre*, signified slaughtered game of any kind; so called from being deposited in a square enclosed space in royal hunting.

17 *Pick* is an old form of *pitch.* See vol. xii. page 285, note 21.

18 *Generosity*, in the sense of its Latin original, for *nobleness, high birth.*

19 *Emulation*, here, is said to mean *factious contention.* I should rather explain it partisan rivalry; trying who should shout the loudest.

20 *'Sdeath!* is a disguised or softened oath, from *God's death.* So we have *'sblood, 'slight, 'sfoot*, and *zounds*, all formed in the same way; *'slight* being from *God's light, zounds* from *God's wounds*, &c.

Win upon power, and throw forth greater themes
For insurrection's arguing.[21]

Men. This is strange.

Mar. Go, get you home, you fragments![22]

Enter a Messenger, *hastily.*

Mess. Where's Caius Marcius?

Mar. Here: what's the matter?

Mess. The news is, sir, the Volsces are in arms.

Mar. I'm glad on't; then we shall ha' means to vent
Our musty superfluity. — See, our best elders!

Enter COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, *and other* Senators; JUNIUS BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS VELUTUS.

1 Sen. Marcius, 'tis true that you have lately told us;
The Volsces are in arms.

Mar. They have a leader,
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to't.
I sin in envying his nobility;
And, were I any thing but what I am,
I'd wish me only he.

Com. You've fought together.

Mar. Were half to half the world by th' ears, and he
Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make
Only my wars with him: he is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.

1 Sen. Then, worthy Marcius,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

Com. It is your former promise.

Mar. Sir, it is;
And I am constant. — Titus Lartius, thou

21 That is, matter for insurrection to *lay hold of*, or *work upon*. So in *King Henry V.*, iii. 1: "And sheath'd their swords for lack of *argument*."

22 Fragments is *odds and ends*, or, as we say, *tag-rag*.

Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.
What, art thou stiff? stand'st out?

Tit. No, Caius Marcius;
I'll lean upon one crutch, and fight with t'other,
Ere stay behind this business.

Men. O, true-bred!

1 Sen. Your company to th' Capitol; where, I know,
Our greatest friends attend us.

Tit. [*To* COM.] Lead you on. —
[*To* MAR.] Follow Cominius: we must follow you;
Right worthy you priority.[23]

Com. Noble Marcius!

1 Sen. [*To the* Citizens.] Hence to your homes; be gone!

Mar. Nay, let them follow.
The Volsces have much corn: take these rats thither
To gnaw their garners. — Worshipful mutineers,
Your valour puts well forth; pray, follow.

[*Exeunt all but* BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS. *The* Citizens *steal away.*

Sic. Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius?

Bru. He has no equal.

Sic. When we were chosen tribunes for the people, —

Bru. Mark'd you his lip and eyes?

Sic. Nay, but his taunts.

Bru. Being moved, he will not spare to gird[24] the gods.

Sic. Be-mock the modest Moon.

Bru. The present war devour him! He is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.[25]

23 You *being* right worthy *of* priority or *precedence.*

24 A *gird* is a cut, a sarcasm, or stroke of satire.

25 The first part of this speech is imprecative: "*May* the present war devour him!" that is, *make an end* of him. — The latter part is an instance of the infinitive used gerundively: "He is grown too proud *of being* so valiant."

Sic. Such a nature,
Tickled with good success,[26] disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon: but I do wonder
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.

Bru. Fame, at the which he aims,—
In whom already he's well graced,—cannot
Better be held, nor more attain'd, than by
A place below the first: for what miscarries
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform
To th' utmost of a man; and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Marcius, *O, if he
Had borne the business!*

Sic. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion, that so sticks on Marcius, shall
Of his demerits[27] rob Cominius.

Bru. Come:
Half all Cominius' honours are to Marcius,
Though Marcius earn'd them not; and all his faults
To Marcius shall be honours, though, indeed,
In aught he merit not.

Sic. Let's hence, and hear
How the dispatch is made; and in what fashion,
More than his singularity,[28] he goes
Upon this present action.

Bru. Let's along. [*Exeunt.*

[26] *Success* means, literally, that which *follows* something else. Hence it was formerly just as proper to say *bad* success as *good* success. *Sequel* and *sequent* are now used in much the same way.

[27] *Demerits* and *merits* had the same meaning. So in Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey:* "I have not promoted you to condign preferments according to your *demerits*." See vol. xvii. page 171, note 8.

[28] That is, in what *style* or *character* other than his usual *assumption*, or *putting on airs, of superiority.* Spoken sarcastically.

SCENE II. — *Corioli. The Senate-House.*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS *and certain* Senators.

1 Sen. So, your opinion is, Aufidius,
That they of Rome are enter'd in[1] our counsels,
And know how we proceed.
Auf. Is it not yours?
What ever hath been thought on in this State,
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome
Had circumvention?[2] 'Tis not four days gone
Since I heard thence; these are the words: I think
I have the letter here; yes, here it is:

[Reads.] *They've press'd[3] a power, but it is not known*
Whether for east or west: the dearth is great;
The people mutinous; and it is rumour'd,
Cominius, Marcius your old enemy, —
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you, —
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,
These three lead on this preparation
Whither 'tis bent; most likely 'tis for you:
Consider of it.

1 Sen. Our army's in the field:
We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready
To answer us.
Auf. Nor did you think it folly

1 *In* for *into;* the two being often used indiscriminately.

2 That is, *underhand intelligence,* or *knowledge got by* circumvention.

3 The use of *press'd* in this place is well explained by a passage in North's Plutarch: "The common people, being set on a broile and bravery with these words, would not appeare when the Consuls called their names by a bill, to *presse* them for the warres. Martius then, who was now growne to great credit, and a stout man besides, rose up and openly spake against these flattering Tribunes: but to the warres the people by no means would be brought or *constrained.*"

To keep your great pretences[4] veil'd till when
They needs must show themselves; which in the hatching,
It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery
We shall be shorten'd in our aim; which was,
To take-in[5] many towns, ere, almost, Rome
Should know we were afoot.

2 Sen. Noble Aufidius,
Take your commission; hie you to your bands:
Let us alone to guard Corioli.
If they set down before's, for their remove
Bring up your army;[6] but, I think, you'll find
They've not prepar'd for us.

Auf. O, doubt not that;
I speak from certainties. Nay, more;
Some parcels of their power are forth already,
And only hitherward. I leave your Honours.
If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,
'Tis sworn between us, we shall ever strike
Till one can do no more.[7]

All. The gods assist you!

Auf. And keep your Honours safe!

1 Sen. Farewell.

2 Sen. Farewell.

All. Farewell. [*Exeunt.*

[4] *Pretences* is *intentions* or *purposes*. See vol. xvii. page 53, note 51.

[5] To *take-in* was used for to *subdue*, to *conquer*. See page 99, note 16.

[6] "If the Romans besiege us, bring up your army *to remove them*."

[7] Keep on striking till one hath struck his last.

SCENE III. — *Rome. A Room in* MARCIUS'S *House.*

Enter VOLUMNIA *and* VIRGILIA; *they sit down on two low stools, and sew.*

Vol. I pray you, daughter, sing; or express yourself in a more comfortable[1] sort: if my son were my husband, I should freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honour than in the embracements of his bed where he would show most love. When yet he was but tender-bodied, and the only son of my womb; when youth with comeliness pluck'd all gaze his way; when, for a day of kings' entreaties, a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding; I — considering how honour would become such a person; that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir — was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him; from whence he return'd, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man.

Vir. But had he died in the business, madam, how then?

Vol. Then his good report should have been my son; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely: Had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius, I had rather have eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

Enter a Gentlewoman.

Gent. Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

Vir. Beseech you, give me leave to retire[2] myself.

[1] *Comfortable* for *comforting*, that is, *cheerful;* the passive form with the active sense. Repeatedly so. See vol. xv. page 43, note 35.

[2] *Retire* in the sense of *withdraw;* a frequent usage.

Vol. Indeed, you shall not.
Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum;
I see him pluck Aufidius down by th' hair;
As children from a bear, the Volsces shunning him:
Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus,
Come on, you cowards! you were got in fear,
Though you were born in Rome: his bloody brow
With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,
Like to a harvest-man, that's task'd to mow
Or all, or lose his hire.

Vir. His bloody brow! O Jupiter, no blood!

Vol. Away, you fool! it more becomes a man
Than gilt[3] his trophy: the breasts of Hecuba,
When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier
Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood
At Grecian swords, contemning.[4] — Tell Valeria
We're fit to bid her welcome. [*Exit* Gent.

Vir. Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!

Vol. He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee,
And tread upon his neck.

Re-enter Gentlewoman *with* VALERIA *and her* Usher.

Val. My ladies both, good day to you.

Vol. Sweet madam.

Vir. I am glad to see your ladyship.

Val. How do you both? you're manifest house-keepers.[5]
What are you sewing here? A fine spot,[6] in good faith.
How does your little son?

Vir. I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

[3] *Gilt* was used for *gold* or *gilding*. So in *King Henry V.*, iv. 3: "Our gayness and our *gilt* are all besmirch'd."

[4] *Contemning* for *contemptuously* or *in contempt*.

[5] *House-keepers* for *home-keepers* or *stayers-at-home*.

[6] A handsome spot of embroidery. We often hear of *spotted* muslin.

Vol. He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum, than look upon his schoolmaster.

Val. O' my word, the father's son: I'll swear, 'tis a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I look'd upon him o' Wednesday half an hour together: 'has such a confirm'd countenance. I saw him run after a gilded butterfly; and, when he caught it, he let it go again; and after it again; and over and over he comes, and up again; catch'd it again: and, whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth, and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammock'd[7] it!

Vol. One on's father's moods.

Val. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

Vir. A crack,[8] madam.

Val. Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

Vir. No, good madam; I will not out of doors.

Val. Not out of doors!

Vol. She shall, she shall.

Vir. Indeed, no, by your patience; I'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.

Val. Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably: come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

Vir. I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with my prayers; but I cannot go thither.

Vol. Why, I pray you?

Vir. 'Tis not to save labour, nor that I want love.

Val. You would be another Penelope: yet, they say, all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come; I would your cambric were sensible[9] as

[7] To *mammock* is to tear or cut in pieces.

[8] A *crack* is a sprightly forward boy. So in Shallow's account of the boy Jack Falstaff, *2 Henry IV.*, iii. 2: "I saw him break Skogan's head at the court gate, when he was a *crack*, not thus high."

[9] *Sensible* for *sensitive*, or *susceptible of pain*. See vol. vii. page 46, note 26.

your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

Vir. No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth.

Val. In, truth, la, go with me; and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

Vir. O, good madam, there can be none yet.

Val. Verily, I do not jest with you; there came news from him last night.

Vir. Indeed, madam?

Val. In earnest, it's true; I heard a Senator speak it. Thus it is: The Volsces have an army forth; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power: your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli; they nothing doubt prevailing, and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honour; and so, I pray, go with us.

Vir. Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in every thing hereafter.

Vol. Let her alone, lady: as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

Val. In troth, I think she would. — Fare you well, then. — Come, good sweet lady. — Pr'ythee, Virgilia, turn thy solemness out o' door, and go along with us.

Vir. No, at a word, madam; indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.

Val. Well, then, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. — *Before Corioli.*

Enter, with drum and Colours, MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Officers, *and* Soldiers.

Mar. Yonder comes news: a wager they have met.

Lart. My horse to yours, no.

Mar. 'Tis done.

Lart. Agreed.

Enter a Messenger.

Mar. Say, has our general met the enemy?

Mess. They lie in view, but have not spoke as yet.[1]

Lart. So, the good horse is mine.

Mar. I'll buy him of you.

Lart. No, I'll nor sell nor give him; lend you him I will
For half a hundred years. — Summon the town.

Mar. How far off lie these armies?

Mess. Within this mile and half.

Mar. Then shall we hear their 'larum,[2] and they ours. —
Now, Mars, I pr'ythee, make us quick in work,
That we with smoking swords may march from hence,
To help our fielded friends![3] — Come, blow thy blast. —

They sound a parley. Enter, on the walls, some Senators *and others.*

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

1 Sen. No, nor a man that fears you more than he;
That's lesser than a little. [*Drums afar off.*] Hark, our drums
Are bringing forth our youth! we'll break our walls,
Rather than they shall pound us up: our gates,
Which yet seem shut, we have but pinn'd with rushes;
They'll open of themselves. [*Alarum afar off.*] Hark you, far off!
There is Aufidius; list, what work he makes
Amongst your cloven army.

Mar. O, they're at it!

[1] They lie in sight of each other, but have not yet given the signal of battle. See vol. xvi. page 43, note 23.

[2] *Alarm* or *alarum* is, literally, *all arm;* the old cry, *To arms!*

[3] Meaning, our friends who are in the field of battle.

Lart. Their noise be our instruction. — Ladders, ho!

The Volsces *enter and pass over.*

Mar. They fear us not, but issue forth their city.
Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight
With hearts more proof[4] than shields. — Advance, brave Titus:
They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts,
Which makes me sweat with wrath. — Come on, my fellows:
He that retires, I'll take him for a Volsce,
And he shall feel mine edge.

Alarum; and exeunt Romans *and* Volsces, *fighting. The* Romans *are beaten back to their trenches. Re-enter* MARCIUS.

Mar. All the contagion of the south light on you,
You shames of Rome! you herd of — Boils and plagues
Plaster you o'er; that you may be abhorr'd
Further than seen, and one infect another
Against the wind a mile! You souls of geese,
That bear the shapes of men, how have you run
From slaves that apes would beat! Pluto and Hell!
All hurt behind; backs red, and faces pale
With flight and agued fear! Mend, and charge home,
Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe,
And make my wars on you: look to't. Come on:
If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives,
As they us to our trenches. Follow me.

Another alarum. The Volsces *and* Romans *re-enter, and the fight is renewed. The* Volsces *retire into Corioli, and* MARCIUS *follows them to the gates.*

[4] *Proof,* as we still say *fire-proof,* or *reason-proof;* proof *against fire,* or *against reason.* The word is very common in the language of military engineering.

So, now the gates are ope. Now prove good seconds:
'Tis for the followers fortune widens them,
Not for the fliers: mark me, and do the like.
[*Enters the gates.*

1 Sol. Fool-hardiness; not I.
2 Sol. Nor I. [MARCIUS *is shut in.*
1 Sol. See, they have shut him in.
All. To th' pot,[5] I warrant him. [*Alarum continues.*

Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS.

Lart. What is become of Marcius?
All. Slain, sir, doubtless.
1 Sol. Following the fliers at the very heels,
With them he enters; who, upon the sudden,
Clapp'd-to their gates: he is himself alone,
To answer all the city.
Lart. O noble fellow!
Who, sensible,[6] outdares his senseless sword,
And, when it bows, stands up! Thou art lost, Marcius:
A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier
Even to Cato's wish,[7] not fierce and terrible
Only in strokes; but, with thy grim looks and

[5] That is, to the *pit* of destruction. "Gone to the *pot*" is still current, though in rather vulgar language.

[6] *Sensible* is having *sensation*. See page 201, note 9. There is a similar thought in Sidney's *Arcadia*: "Their very armour by piece-meale fell away from them; yet their flesh abode the wounds constantly, as though it were less *sensible* of smart than the senseless armour."

[7] So in North's Plutarch: "For he was even such another as Cato would have a souldier and a captaine to be; not only terrible and fierce to lay about him, but to make the enemy afeard with the sound of his voice and grimnesse of his countenance." Cato was not born till some 255 years after the death of Coriolanus. The Poet may have been led into the anachronism by not observing the difference between historical narrative and dramatic representation.

The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,
Thou madest thine enemies shake, as if the world
Were feverous and did tremble.

Re-enter MARCIUS, *bleeding, assaulted by the Enemy.*

1 Sol. Look, sir.

Lart. O, 'tis Marcius!
Let's fetch him off, or make remain[8] alike.

[*They fight, and all enter the city.*

SCENE V. — *Within Corioli. A Street.*

Enter certain Romans, *with spoils.*

1 Rom. This will I carry to Rome.

2 Rom. And I this.

3 Rom. A murrain on't! I took this for silver.

[*Alarum continues still afar off.*

Enter MARCIUS *and* TITUS LARTIUS *with a* Trumpeter.

Mar. See here these movers that do prize their hours[1]
At a crack'd drachma! Cushions, leaden spoons,
Irons of a doit,[2] doublets that hangmen would
Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,
Ere yet the fight be done, pack up: down with them!
And hark, what noise the general makes! To him!
There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,
Piercing our Romans: then, valiant Titus, take
Convenient numbers to make good the city;
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste
To help Cominius.

[8] *Make remain* sounds odd; but Shakespeare has many instances of the word used in like manner.

[1] *Hours* is here put for *time*, the most precious of all things in war.

[2] Pieces of iron *not worth a copper*.

Lart. Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;
Thy exercise hath been too violent for
A second course of fight.
Mar. Sir, praise me not;
My work hath yet not warm'd me: fare you well.
The blood I drop is rather physical [3]
Than dangerous to me: to Aufidius thus
I will appear, and fight.
Lart. Now the fair goddess, Fortune,
Fall deep in love with thee; and her great charms
Misguide th' opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,
Prosperity be thy page!
Mar. Thy friend no less
Than those she placeth highest! [4] So, farewell.
Lart. Thou worthiest Marcius!— [*Exit* MARCIUS.
Go, sound thy trumpet in the market-place;
Call thither all the officers o' the town,
Where they shall know our mind: away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*Near the Camp of* COMINIUS.

Enter COMINIUS *and Forces, retreating.*

Com. Breathe you, my friends: well fought; we are come off
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands
Nor cowardly in retire: believe me, sirs,
We shall be charged again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims and conveying gusts [1] we've heard
The charges of our friends.—Ye Roman gods,
Lead their successes as we wish our own,

[3] *Physical* for *wholesome* or *medicinal*. See vol. xiv. page 47, note 51.

[4] The meaning probably is, "Fortune, or prosperity, be thy friend no less than she is the friend of those whom she *holds dearest*."

[1] Now and then, as gusts of wind conveyed the noise.

That both our powers, with smiling fronts encountering,
May give you thankful sacrifice! —

Enter a Messenger.

Thy news?
Mess. The citizens of Corioli have issued,
And given to Lartius and to Marcius battle:
I saw our party to their trenches driven,
And then I came away.
Com. Though thou speak'st truth,
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is't since?
Mess. Above an hour, my lord.
Com. 'Tis not a mile; briefly, we heard their drums:
How couldst thou in a mile confound[2] an hour,
And bring thy news so late?
Mess. Spies of the Volsces
Held me in chase, that I was forced to wheel
Three or four miles about; else had I, sir,
Half an hour since brought my report.
Com. Who's yonder,
That does appear as he were flay'd? O gods!
He has the stamp of Marcius; and I have
Before-time seen him thus.
Mar. [*Within.*] Come I too late?
Com. The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor,
More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue
From every meaner man's.

Enter MARCIUS.

Mar. Come I too late?
Com. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,

[2] To *confound* for to *consume* or *spend.* Repeatedly so. — The sense of the preceding clause appears to be, "in brief, the distance is so short, that we heard their drums."

But mantled in your own.
Mar. O, let me clip ye
In arms as sound as when I woo'd; in heart
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burn'd to bedward!
Com. Flower of warriors,
How is't with Titus Lartius?
Mar. As with a man busied about decrees:
Condemning some to death, and some to exile;
Ransoming him or pitying,[3] threatening th' other ·
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.
Com. Where is that slave
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches?
Where is he? call him hither.
Mar. Let him alone;
He did inform the truth: but for our gentlemen,
The common file — a plague! — tribunes for them! —
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat as they did budge
From rascals worse than they.
Com. But how prevail'd you?
Mar. Will the time serve to tell? I do not think so.
Where is the enemy? are you lords o' the field?
If not, why cease you till you are so?
Com. Marcius,
We have at disadvantage fought, and did
Retire, to win our purpose.
Mar. How lies their battle?[4] know you on which side

[3] Taking ransom of one, or letting him go for pity; treating with some of the captives for the price of their freedom, or mercifully discharging them without pay.

[4] *Battle* was often used for *army;* especially of an army drawn up in battle-array, or an *embattled* army.

They've placed their men of trust?
Com. As I guess, Marcius,
Their bands i' the vaward are the Antiates,[5]
Of their best trust; o'er them Aufidius,
Their very heart of hope.
Mar. I do beseech you,
By all the battles wherein we have fought,
By th' blood we've shed together, by the vows
We've made to éndure friends, that you directly
Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates;
And that you not delay the present,[6] but,
Filling the air with swords advanced and darts,
We prove this very hour.
Com. Though I could wish
You were conducted to a gentle bath,
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
Deny your asking: take your choice of those
That best can aid your action.
Mar. Those are they
That most are willing. — If any such be here —
As it were sin to doubt — that love this painting
Wherein you see me smear'd; if any fear
Lesser his person[7] than an ill report;
If any think brave death outweighs bad life,
And that his country's dearer than himself;
Let him alone, or so many so minded,
Wave thus, t' express his disposition,
And follow Marcius. [*They all shout, and wave their swords; take him up in their arms, and cast up their caps.*

[5] The *vaward* is the *vanguard*, that is, the *front*, where the best soldiers would naturally be placed. — Shakespeare uses *Antiates* as a trisyllable, as if it had been written *Antiats.*

[6] Meaning the present *business;* that which craves instant dispatch.

[7] That is, fear less *for* his person. Often so. See vol. ix. page 147, note 21.

Go we along; make you a sword of me.
If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volsces? none of you but is
Able to bear against the great Aufidius
A shield as hard as his. A certain number,
Though thanks to all, must I select: the rest
Shall bear the business in some other fight,
As cause will be obey'd.[8] Please you to march;
And I shall quickly draw out my command,
Which men are best inclined.[9]

Com. March on, my fellows:
Make good this ostentation,[10] and you shall
Divide in all with us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. — *The Gates of Corioli.*

TITUS LARTIUS, *having set a guard upon Corioli, going with drum and trumpet toward* COMINIUS *and* CAIUS MARCIUS, *enters with a* Lieutenant, *a party of* Soldiers, *and a* Scout.

Lart. So, let the ports[1] be guarded: keep your dutie
As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch
Those centuries[2] to our aid; the rest will serve
For a short holding: if we lose the field,
We cannot keep the town.

Lieu. Fear not our care, sir.

[8] As *occasion* shall *require*. *Cause* and *occasion* readily interchange their senses; and the usage is common in all sorts of speech.

[9] The order is, apparently, for the army to march along by him; he the while selecting such as seem fittest for the enterprise.

[10] This *showing* or *display of courage*. See vol. iv. page 225, note 9.

[1] The *ports* are the *gates*. Like the Latin *porta*.

[2] *Centuries* are companies of a hundred men each.

Lart. Hence, and shut your gates upon's. —
Our guider, come; to th' Roman camp conduct us.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. — *A Field of Battle between the Roman and the Volscian Camps.*

Alarum. Enter, from opposite sides, MARCIUS *and* AUFIDIUS.

Mar. I'll fight with none but thee; for I do hate thee
Worse than a promise-breaker.
Auf. We hate alike:
Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor
More than thy fame I envy. Fix thy foot.
Mar. Let the first budger die the other's slave,
And the gods doom him after!
Auf. If I fly, Marcius,
Halloo me like a hare.
Mar. Within these three hours, Tullus,
Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,
And made what work I pleased: 'tis not my blood
Wherein thou see'st me mask'd; for thy revenge
Wrench up thy power to th' highest.
Auf. Wert thou the Hector
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,[3]
Thou shouldst not 'scape me here. —
[*They fight, and certain* Volsces *come to the aid of* AUFIDIUS.
Officious, and not valiant, you have shamed me
In your condemnèd seconds.[4]
[*Exeunt fighting, driven in by* MARCIUS.

[3] The whip or *scourge* that your boasted *progenitors* were possessed of. This use of *progeny* for *progenitors* is, I believe, singular.

[4] *Condemnèd seconds* is *help* condemned *as worthless or unavailing.* The use of to *second* for to *help* is very common.

SCENE IX. — *The Roman Camp.*

Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Flourish. Enter, from one side, COMINIUS *and* Romans; *from the other side,* MARCIUS, *with his arm in a scarf, and other* Romans.

Com. If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,
Thou'lt not believe thy deeds: but I'll report it,
Where Senators shall mingle tears with smiles;
Where great patricians shall attend, and shrug,
I' the end admire; where ladies shall be frighted,
And, gladly quaked,[1] hear more; where the dull tribunes,
That, with the fusty plébeians,[2] hate thine honours,
Shall say, against their hearts, *We thank the gods*
Our Rome hath such a soldier!
Yet camest thou to a morsel of this feast,[3]
Having fully dined before.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS, *with his power, from the pursuit.*

Lart. O general,
Here is the steed, we the caparison:
Hadst thou beheld —

Mar. Pray now, no more: my mother,
Who has a charter [4] to extol her blood,
When she does praise me grieves me. I have done
As you have done, — that's what I can; induced
As you have been, — that's for my country:

[1] "Gladly *quaked*" is gladly *made to tremble*, or to *shake*, with fright.

[2] Shakespeare repeatedly uses *plebeians* with the first syllable accented, as if it were spelt *plebeans*.

[3] We should say "*this* morsel of *a* feast." The meaning is, that what the hero has done here is but as a morsel, *compared to* the full meal of fighting which he had before gone through at Corioli.

[4] *Charter* is *special privilege* or *admitted right*.

He that has but effected his good will
Hath overta'en mine act.

Com. You shall not be
The grave of your deserving; Rome must know
The value of her own: 'twere a concealment
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,
To hide your doings; and to silence that
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,
Would seem but modest:[5] therefore, I beseech you —
In sign of what you are, not to reward
What you have done — before our army hear me.

Mar. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
To hear[6] themselves remember'd.

Com. Should they not,
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,
And tent[7] themselves with death. Of all the horses, —
Whereof we've ta'en good, and good store, — of all
The treasure in this field achieved and city,
We render you the tenth; to be ta'en forth,
Before the common distribution, at
Your only choice.

Mar. I thank you, general;
But cannot make my heart consent to take
A bribe to pay my sword: I do refuse it;
And stand upon my common part with those
That have beheld the doing.

[*A long flourish. They all cry,* Marcius! Marcius! *cast up their caps and lances:* COMINIUS *and* LARTIUS *stand bare.*

[5] An irregular construction; but the meaning is, "It were no less than a slander, to pass silently over that prowess which might be praised to the utmost, and still the praise would come short of the truth."

[6] *To hear* is equivalent to *at hearing.* See page 195, note 25.

[7] To *tent* a wound is, properly, to *probe* it: here the word is used in the general sense of to *dress*, or to *heal.*

Mar. May these same instruments, which you profane,
Never sound more! Shall drums and trumpets, when
I' the field, prove flatterers? Let Courts and cities be
Made all of false-faced soothing, where steel grows
Soft as the parasite's silk: let them be made
An overture for th' wars.[8] No more, I say!
For that I have not wash'd my nose that bled,
Or foil'd some debile wretch, — which, without note,
Here's many else have done, — you shout me forth
In acclamations hyperbolical;
As if I loved my little should be dieted
In praises sauced with lies.

Com. Too modest are you;
More cruel to your good report than grateful
To us that give you truly: by your patience,
If 'gainst yourself you be incensed, we'll put you —
Like one that means his proper harm — in manacles,
Then reason[9] safely with you. — Therefore, be't known,
As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius
Wears this war's garland: in token of the which,
My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,
With all his trim belonging; and from this time,
For what he did before Corioli, call him,
With all th' applause and clamour of the host,
CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS. — Bear

[8] That is, let drums and trumpets be used in making *introductions* or *preludes* to battle. As to the meaning of the whole passage, it may be observed that the speaker is referring to the "long flourish" which has just been made with the instruments in honour of what he has done. This he regards as a profanation: he would have drums and trumpets used only for sounding incitements to valiant action, not for sounding compliments and flatteries on the battle-field. All such "false-faced soothing" he would have confined to "Courts and cities," where steel itself, like silk, is used for ornament, not for fighting.

[9] To *reason*, as the word is here used, is to *talk* or *converse*. Often so.

Th' addition nobly ever!

[*Flourish. Trumpets sound and drums.*

All. Caius Marcius Coriolanus!

Cor. I will go wash;
And, when my face is fair, you shall perceive
Whether I blush or no: howbeit, I thank you.—
I mean to stride your steed; and at all times,
To undercrest your good addition
To th' fairness of my power.[10]

Com. So, to our tent;
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
To Rome of our success.—You, Titus Lartius,
Must to Corioli back: send us to Rome
The best, with whom we may articulate,[11]
For their own good and ours.

Lart. I shall, my lord.

Cor. The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
Refused most princely gifts, am bound to beg
Of my lord general.

Com. Take't; 'tis yours. What is't?

Cor. I sometime lay, here in Corioli,
At a poor man's house; he used me kindly.
He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;
But then Aufidius was within my view,
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity: I request you
To give my poor host freedom.[12]

[10] *Addition* is *title;* the monumental surname just conferred upon him. To *undercrest* is to *sustain*, to *bear;* as a man bears his helmet, or the distinctive badge worn upon it. So that the meaning is, "I will support, as fairly as I can, the honourable distinction you have bestowed upon me."

[11] The *chief men* of Corioli, with whom we may *enter into articles.* Bullokar has the word "*articulate*, to set down articles, or conditions of agreement." We still retain the word *capitulate*, which anciently had nearly the same meaning, namely, "To *article*, or agree upon articles."

[12] The Poet found this incident thus related in Plutarch: "Onely this

Com. O, well begg'd!
Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free as is the wind.— Deliver him, Titus.
Lart. Marcius, his name?
Cor. By Jupiter, forgot!
I'm weary; yea, my memory is tired.—
Have we no wine here?
Com. Go we to our tent:
The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time
It should be look'd to: come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X.— *The Camp of the* Volsces.

A flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS *bloody, with two or three* Soldiers.

Auf. The town is ta'en!
1 Sol. 'Twill be deliver'd back on good condition.
Auf. Condition!
I would I were a Roman; for I cannot,
Being a Volsce, be that I am.[1] Condition!
What good condition can a treaty find
I' the part that is at mercy?— Five times, Marcius,
I've fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me;
And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter
As often as we eat.— By th' elements,
If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,

grace, said he, I crave, and beseech you to grant me: Among the Volsces there is an old friend and hoast of mine, an honest wealthy man, and now a prisoner; who, living before in great wealth in his owne countrey, liveth now a poore prisoner in the hands of his enemies; and yet, notwithstanding all this his misery and misfortune, it would do me great pleasure, if I could save him from this one danger, to keepe him from being sold as a slave."

[1] "If I were a Roman, I could love Marcius as a compatriot and friend; but, being a Volsce, I cannot remain true to myself; my hatred of him as an enemy is transforming me from what I rightly am into a villain."

He's mine, or I am his: mine emulation
Hath not that honour in't it had; for, where [2]
I thought to crush him in an equal force,
True sword to sword, I'll poach [3] at him some way,
Or wrath or craft may get him.

1 Sol. He's the Devil.

Auf. Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour, poison'd
With only suffering stain by him, for him
Shall fly out of itself: [4] nor sleep nor sanctuary,
Being naked, sick; nor fane nor Capitol,
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
Embankments all of fury, shall lift up
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
My hate to Marcius: where I find him, were it
At home, upon my brother's guard,[5] even there,
Against the hospitable canon,[6] would I
Wash my fierce hand in's heart. Go you to th' city;
Learn how 'tis held; and what they are that must
Be hostages for Rome.

1 Sol. Will not you go?

[2] *Where* for *whereas* again. See page 189, note 7.

[3] To *poach* is to thrust at with a sharp-pointed instrument. Thus in Carew's *Survey of Cornwall*, speaking of fish: "They use to *poche* them with an instrument somewhat like a salmon-speare."

[4] "My valour, to reach his life, shall lose its nature, cease to be generous in respect of time and means."—In the next line, the meaning is, "*he* being naked, sick."

[5] That is, in my own house under my brother's protection.—Upon this speech of Aufidius, Coleridge remarks as follows: "I have such deep faith in Shakespeare's heart-lore, that I take for granted that this is in nature; although I cannot in myself discover any germ of possible feeling, which could wax and unfold itself into such a sentiment. However, I perceive that in this speech is meant to be contained a prevention of shock at the after-change in Aufidius' character."

[6] "The hospitable canon" is the law or obligation of hospitality. In the Roman code of morals, the person of a guest was sacred.

Auf. I am attended[7] at the cypress grove: I pray you, —
'Tis south the city mills, — bring me word thither
How the world goes, that to the pace of it
I may spur on my journey.

1 Sol. I shall, sir. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *Rome. A public Place.*

Enter MENENIUS, SICINIUS, *and* BRUTUS.

Men. The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night.

Bru. Good or bad?

Men. Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Marcius.

Sic. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

Men. Pray you, whom does the wolf love?

Sic. The lamb.

Men. Ay, to devour him; as the hungry plebeians would the noble Marcius.

Bru. He's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear.

Men. He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two are old men: tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

Both. Well, sir.

Men. In what enormity is Marcius poor in,[1] that you two have not in abundance?

Bru. He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all.

Sic. Especially in pride.

Bru. And topping[2] all others in boasting.

[7] *Attended* here means *waited for*. See page 109, note 36.

[1] This doubling of the preposition was common. See vol xiii. page 153, note 18.

[2] To *top* is to *surpass;* a frequent usage. See vol. xvii. page 95, note 10.

Men. This is strange now. Do you two know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' the right-hand file? do you?

Both. Why, how are we censured?

Men. Because you talk of pride now, — will you not be angry?

Both. Well, well, sir, well.

Men. Why, 'tis no great matter; for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience: give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud?

Bru. We do it not alone, sir.

Men. I know you can do very little alone; for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single:[3] your abilities are too infant-like for doing much alone. You talk of pride: O that you could turn your eyes toward the napes of your necks,[4] and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O that you could!

Bru. What then, sir?

Men. Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, *alias* fools, as any in Rome.

Sic. Menenius, you are known well enough too.

Men. I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't;[5] said to be something imperfect in favouring the thirst

[3] The Poet repeatedly uses *single* for *weak* or *feeble*.

[4] Alluding to the fable, that every man has a bag hanging before him, in which he puts his neighbour's faults; and another behind, for his own.

[5] We have a similar expression in Lovelace's song, *To Althea, from Prison:*

> When flowing cups run swiftly round,
> With no *allaying Thames;*
> Our careless heads with roses bound,
> Our hearts with loyal flames.

complaint; hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion; one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning:[6] what I think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen as you are,—I cannot call you Lycurguses,—if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I cannot say your Worships have deliver'd the matter well, when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables: and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm,[7] follows it that I am known well enough too? what harm can your bisson[8] conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too?

Bru. Come, sir, come, we know you well enough.

Men. You know neither me, yourselves, nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs:[9] you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller; and then rejourn the controversy of three-pence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinch'd with the colic, you make faces like mummers; set up the bloody flag against all patience;[10] and,

[6] Rather a late lier-down than an early riser. So in *Love's Labours Lost:* "In the *posteriors* of this day, which the rude multitude call the afternoon."

[7] This word is well explained in Raleigh's *History of the World:* "Because, in the little frame of man's body, there is a representation of the universal, and (by allusion) a participation of all the parts there, therefore man was called *microcosmos*, or *the little world*." See vol. x. page 239, note 2.

[8] *Bisson* is an old word for *blind*. So in Udal, St. Mark, viii.: "Thys manne was not purblynde, or a lyttle appayred and decayed in syght, but as *bysome* as was possible to be." The word was variously spelt *bizend*, *beesen*, *bison*. It is hardly needful to add that "bisson conspectuities" is a humorous substitute for *blind eyes*. See vol. xiv. page 212, note 80.

[9] For their obeisance; called *making a leg*. See vol. xi. p. 64, note 47.

[10] Declare war against patience.

in roaring for a chamber-pot, dismiss the controversy bleeding, the more entangled by your hearing: all the peace you make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones.

Bru. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the Capitol.

Men. Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are.[11] When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entomb'd in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion; though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. God-den[12] to your Worships: more of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you. — [BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS *retire.*

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *and* VALERIA, *with* Attendants.

How now, my as fair as noble ladies, —and the Moon, were she earthly, no nobler,— whither do you follow your eyes so fast?

Vol. Honourable Menenius, my boy Marcius approaches; for the love of Juno, let's go.

Men. Ha! Marcius coming home?

Vol. Ay, worthy Menenius; and with most prosperous approbation.

Men. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee. — Hoo! Marcius coming home!

[11] So in *Much Ado about Nothing:* "Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence."

[12] *God-den* is an old colloquialism for *good even* or *good day.*

Vir.
Val. } Nay, 'tis true.

Vol. Look, here's a letter from him: the State hath another, his wife another; and, I think, there's one at home for you.

Men. I will make my very house reel to-night. A letter for me!

Vir. Yes, certain, there's a letter for you; I saw't.

Men. A letter for me! it gives me an estate of seven years' health; in which time I will make a lip at the physician: the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricutic,[13] and, to[14] this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench. Is he not wounded? he was wont to come home wounded.

Vir. O, no, no, no.

Vol. O, he is wounded; I thank the gods for't.

Men. So do I too, if it be not too much. Brings 'a victory in his pocket? The wounds become him.

Vol. On's brows:[15] Menenius, he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

Men. Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly?

Vol. Titus Lartius writes, they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

Men. And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that: an he had stay'd by him, I would not have been so fidius'd

[13] A word probably coined by old Menenius himself for *quack medicine.* — Divers critics have made merry at the Poet for thus making Menenius refer to Galen, the person speaking having lived about 650 years before the person spoken of. I leave it for others to determine whether the anachronism were perpetrated in ignorance or in contempt of historical accuracy.

[14] *Compared to*, or *in comparison with.* *To* is often used thus.

[15] "*He brings victory* on his brow"; for he comes the third time home *brow-bound* with the *oaken garland.* Volumnia's thoughts stick upon Menenius's question, "Brings 'a victory in his pocket?" and she takes no notice of the words, "The wounds become him."

for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the Senate possess'd[16] of this?

Vol. Good ladies, let's go. — Yes, yes, yes; the Senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war: he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

Val. In troth, there's wonderous things spoke of him.

Men. Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

Vir. The gods grant them true!

Vol. True! pow, wow.

Men. True! I'll be sworn they are true. Where is he wounded? — [*To the* Tribunes.] God save your good Worships! Marcius is coming home: he has more cause to be proud. — Where is he wounded?

Vol. I' the shoulder and i' the left arm: there will be large cicatrices to show the people, when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i' the body.

Men. One i' the neck, and two i' the thigh; there's nine that I know.[17]

Vol. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

Men. Now it's twenty-seven: every gash was an enemy's grave. [*A shout and flourish within.*] Hark! the trumpets.

Vol. These are the ushers of Marcius: before him he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears.
*Death, that dark spirit, in's nervy arm doth lie;

[16] *Possess'd* is *informed.* Often so. See vol. xvi. page 292, note 15.

[17] Menenius probably has no reference to the wounds that Volumnia was speaking of, but is trying to reckon up and locate those already known to himself: he therefore specifies three, and then, in his haste, merely states the gross number.

*Which being advanced, declines, and then men die.[18]

A sennet. Trumpets sound. Enter COMINIUS *and* TITUS LARTIUS; *between them,* CORIOLANUS, *crowned with an oaken garland; with* Captains, Soldiers, *and a* Herald.

Her. Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight
Within Corioli gates; where he hath won,
With fame, a name to[19] *Caius Marcius;* these
In honour follows *Coriolanus.* — Welcome,
Welcome to Rome, renown'd Coriolanus! [*Flourish.*
All. Welcome to Rome, renown'd Coriolanus!
Cor. No more of this, it does offend my heart;
Pray now, no more.
Com. Look, sir, your mother:
Cor. O,
You have, I know, petition'd all the gods
For my prosperity. [*Kneels.*
Vol. [*Raising him.*] Nay, my good soldier, up;
My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and
By deed-achieving honour newly named, —
What is it? — Coriolanus must I call thee?
But, O, thy wife!
Cor. My gracious silence, hail![20]
Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home,
That weep'st to see me triumph? Ah, my dear,

[18] He has but to lift up his hand, and let it fall, and men sink beneath it. — This ranting couplet is most likely an interpolation; perhaps, as White thinks, "added in the prompter's book, to please the actor of *Volumnia* with a round, mouth-filling speech."

[19] Here *to* has the force of *in addition to.* See vol. xvi. page 199, note 3.

[20] By "gracious silence" is probably meant, "thou whose silent tears are more eloquent and grateful to me than the clamorous applause of the rest." So in Jonson's *Every Man Out of his Humour:* "You shall see sweet *silent rhetoric* and *dumb eloquence* speaking in her eye." *Gracious* is sometimes used by Shakespeare for *grateful, acceptable.*

Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
And mothers that lack sons.

Men. Now, the gods crown thee!

Cor. And live you yet? — [*To* VALERIA.] O my sweet lady, pardon.

Vol. I know not where to turn. — O, welcome home! —
And welcome, general! and ye're welcome all.

Men. A hundred thousand welcomes: — I could weep,
And I could laugh; I'm light and heavy: — welcome!
A curse begin at very root on's heart
That is not glad to see thee! — You are three
That Rome should dote on: yet, by th' faith of men,
We've some old crab-trees here at home that will not
Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors!
We call a nettle but a nettle, and
The faults of fools but folly.

Com. Ever right.

Cor. Menenius ever, ever.

Her. Give way there, and go on!

Cor. [*To* VOL. *and* VIR.] Your hand, and yours:
Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited;
From whom I have received not only greetings,
But with them charge of honours.

Vol. I have lived
To see inherited my very wishes,[21]
And the buildings of my fancy: only there
Is one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

Cor. Know, good mother,
I had rather be their servant in my way

21 "To see myself *in possession* of all I have wished for." The use of *inherit* for *possess* or *have* occurs frequently. See vol vii. page 85, note 31.

Than sway with them in theirs.

Com. On, to the Capitol!

[*Flourish. Cornets. Exeunt in state, as before.*
BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS *come forward.*

Bru. All tongues speak of him, and the blearèd sights
Are spectacled to see him: your prattling nurse
Into a rupture lets her baby cry
While she chats him:[22] the kitchen malkin pins
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,[23]
Clambering the walls to eye him: stalls, bulks, windows,
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges horsed[24]
With variable complexions; all agreeing
In earnestness to see him: seld-shown flamens
Do press among the popular throngs, and puff
To win a vulgar station:[25] our veil'd dames

[22] "While she chats him" probably means "while she *makes* him the *theme* of chat; she being so carried away with the enthusiasm as to lose all thought of the crying baby, cry he never so vehemently.—It having been questioned whether crying ever causes a rupture in babies, Judge Blackstone said, "I have inquired, and am told it is usual." Whereupon Dr. C. M. Ingleby observes, "Probably most fathers and mothers know that such is the fact." And he quotes from Phioravante's *Secrets*, 1582: "To helpe yong Children of the Rupture. The Rupture is caused two waies, the one through weaknesse of the place, and the other through much criyng."

[23] "Kitchen *malkin*" is equivalent to kitchen *wench*, as "country *malkin*" is to country *wench*. *Malkin*, applied to a woman, is of frequent occurrence in old writers, and is supposed to be a diminutive of *Mal*, that is *Mary*, as *Wilkin* is of *Will*, and *Tomkin* of *Tom*.—*Lockram* was a cheap coarse linen.—*Reechy* is *reeking*, that is, *smoky*. So in *The Invisible Comedy*, 1610: "He look'd so *reechily*, like bacon hanging on the chimney's roof."

[24] Men crowd together upon the lead-covered roofs, and sit astride the ridge-poles, of houses.

[25] *Seld* was often used for *seldom*. Flamens were a high order of priests.—"Vulgar station" is a standing-place among the vulgar.—A *war of colours* in a woman's face seems to have been a favourite image with the Poet. So in *The Taming of the Shrew*: "Such *war of white and red* within her cheeks." And in *Lucrece*:

> The silent *war* of lilies and of roses,
> Which Tarquin view'd in her fair face's field.

Commit the war of white and damask, in
Their nicely-gauded cheeks, to th' wanton spoil
Of Phœbus' burning kisses: such a pother,
As if that whatsoever god who leads him
Were slily crept into his human powers,
And gave him graceful posture.

Sic. On the sudden,
I warrant him Consul.

Bru. Then our office may,
During his power, go sleep.

Sic. He cannot temperately transport his honours
From where he should begin to th' end; but will
Lose those he hath won.[26]

Bru. In that there's comfort.

Sic. Doubt not
The commoners, for whom we stand, but they,
Upon their ancient malice, will forget,
With the least cause, these his new honours; which
That he will give them, make as little question
As he is proud to do't.[27]

Bru. I heard him swear,
Were he to stand for Consul, never would he
Appear i' the market-place, nor on him put
The napless vesture of humility;
Nor, showing, as the manner is, his wounds
To th' people, beg their stinking breaths.

Sic. 'Tis right.

Bru. It was his word: O, he would miss it, rather

[26] The meaning seems to be, he cannot be content to proceed temperately in the course of honour, beginning, as he should, with the lower, and advancing gradually to the highest: and so will make shipwreck of all his honours by the way.

[27] "Which *cause* make as little question that he will give them as *that* he is *proud of doing* it." "Proud *to do't*" is another instance of the infinitive used gerundively.

Than carry't but by th' suit o' the gentry to him,
And the desire of the nobles.

Sic. I wish no better
Than have him hold that purpose, and to put it
In execution.

Bru. 'Tis most like he will.

Sic. It shall be to him, then, as our good wills,[28]
A sure destruction.

Bru. So it must fall out
To him or our authorities. For an end,
We must suggest the people in what hatred
He still hath held them; that to's power[29] he would
Have made them mules, silenced their pleaders, and
Dispropertied their freedoms; holding them,
In human action and capacity,
Of no more soul nor fitness for the world
Than camels in the war; who have their provand[30]
Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows
For sinking under them.

Sic. This, as you say, suggested
At some time when his soaring insolence
Shall touch the people, — which time shall not want,
If he be put upon't; and that's as easy
As to set dogs on sheep, — will be as fire
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze
Shall darken him for ever. —

Enter a Messenger.

Bru. What's the matter?

Mess. You're sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought
That Marcius shall be Consul.

[28] As our *interest requires; wills* being a verb.
[29] Meaning, to *the utmost* of his power.
[30] *Provand* is an old word for *provender*.

I've seen the dumb men throng to see him, and
The blind to hear him speak: matrons flung gloves,
Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchers,
Upon him as he pass'd:[31] the nobles bended,
As to Jove's statue; and the commons made
A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts.
I never saw the like.

Bru. Let's to the Capitol;
And carry with us ears and eyes for th' time,
But hearts for the event.

Sic. Have with you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Same. The Capitol.*

Enter two Officers, *to lay cushions.*

1 Off. Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand for consulships?

2 Off. Three, they say: but 'tis thought of every one Coriolanus will carry it.

1 Off. That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people.

2 Off. Faith, there have been many great men that have flatter'd the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore: so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground: therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition; and, out of his noble carelessness, lets them plainly see't.

1 Off. If he did not care whether he had their love or

[31] Another anachronism; the Romans being represented as doing what, in the days of chivalry, was done at tiltings and tournaments in honour of the successful combatant.

no, he'd waved indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good nor harm; but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him, and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love.

2 Off. He hath deserved worthily of his country: and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who,[1] having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted into their estimation and report, without any further deed to have them at all:[2] but he hath so planted his honours in their eyes, and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury; to report otherwise, were a malice, that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

1 Off. No more of him; he's a worthy man: make way, they are coming.

A sennet. Enter, with Lictors *before them,* COMINIUS, MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, Senators, SICINIUS, *and* BRUTUS. *The* Senators *take their places; the* Tribunes *take theirs also by themselves.*

Men. Having determined of the Volsces, and

[1] Properly it should be "as *theirs* who"; but the Poet has many like instances of loose construction. Here the irregularity does not obscure the sense.

[2] The meaning is, won the favour of the people by pulling off the hat to them, without doing any thing further to earn it. This is the explanation given by Delius, and is surely right. To *bonnet* or to *cap* is to uncover the head as a token or ceremony of respect. So in *Othello*, i. 1: "Three great ones of the city, in personal suit to make me his lieutenant, oft *capp'd* to him." See, also, vol. xvii. page 171, note 8. — Political demagogues are the same in all ages, evermore fawning and toadying their way into popular favour, and eating all sorts of dirt to the people in order to get their votes; and the people *love to have it so:* all which we need not go far to learn. See Critical Notes.

To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,
As the main point of this our after-meeting,
To gratify his noble service that
Hath thus stood for his country: therefore, please you,
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire
The present Consul, and last general
In our well-found successes, to report
A little of that worthy work perform'd
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus; whom
We meet here, both to thank, and to remember
With honours like himself.[3]

1 Sen. Speak, good Cominius:
Leave nothing out for length, and make us think
Rather our State's defective for requital
Than we to stretch it out. — [*To the* Tribunes.] Masters o' the people,
We do request your kindest ears; and, after,
Your loving motion toward the common body,
To yield what passes here.

Sic. We are convented
Upon a pleasing treaty; and have hearts
Inclinable[4] to honour and advance
The theme of our assembly.

Bru. Which the rather
We shall be blest to do,[5] if he remember
A kinder value of the people than

[3] "With honours *like himself*" probably means with honours *suited or proportionable to his merits.*—"*For* length," in the next line is *on account of* length. So in i. 10, of this play: "My valour, poison'd with only suffering stain by him, *for him* shall fly out of itself." See, also, vol. xvii. page 62, note 21.

[4] *Inclinable* for *inclined*, that is, *disposed.* The endings *-ed* and *-able* or *-ible* were often used interchangeably. See vol. xiv. page 207, note 61.

[5] *Blest to do* is no doubt the same as *blest*, that is, *happy, in doing.* The gerundial infinitive.

He hath hereto prized them at.

Men. That's off, that's off;[6]
I would you rather had been silent. Please you
To hear Cominius speak?

Bru. Most willingly;
But yet my caution was more pertinent
Than the rebuke you give it.

Men. He loves your people;
But tie him not to be their bedfellow. —
Worthy Cominius, speak. — [CORIOLANUS *rises, and offers to go away.*] Nay, keep your place.

1 Sen. Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear
What you have nobly done.

Cor. Your Honours' pardon:
I had rather have my wounds to heal again
Than hear say how I got them.

Bru. Sir, I hope
My words disbench'd you not.

Cor. No, sir; yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.
You soothed not,[7] therefore hurt not: but, your people,
I love them as they weigh.

Men. Pray now, sit down.

Cor. I had rather have one scratch my head i' the sun,
When the alarum were struck, than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd. [*Exit.*

Men. Masters of the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter, —
That's thousand to one good one, — when you now see
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour
Than one on's ears to hear't? — Proceed, Cominius.

[6] *From* the purpose, or *irrelevant:* hence Brutus declares it *pertinent.*
[7] To *soothe* was sometimes used for to *flatter* or *cajole.*

Com. I shall lack voice: the deeds of Coriolanus
Should not be utter'd feebly. — It is held
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and
Most dignifies the haver: if it be,
The man I speak of cannot in the world
Be singly counterpoised. At sixteen years,
When Tarquin made a head[8] for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others: our then Dictator,
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight,
When with his Amazonian chin he drove
The bristled lips before him: he bestrid
An o'er-press'd Roman,[9] and i' the Consul's view
Slew three opposers: Tarquin's self he met,
And struck him on his knee:[10] in that day's feats,
When he might act the woman in the scene,[11]
He proved best man i' the field, and for his meed
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil-age
Man-enter'd thus, he waxèd like a sea;
And, in the brunt of seventeen battles since,
He lurch'd all swords o' the garland.[12] For this last,

[8] To *make a head* was in frequent use for to *raise* or to *lead an army.*

[9] To *bestride* a man when down upon the battle-field was considered an act of the greatest kindness; and to save the life of a fellow-soldier in fight was one of the most honourable services a Roman could render to the State. See vol. xvii. page 92, note 1.

[10] Not that he gave Tarquin a blow on the knee, but gave him such a blow as made him *fall on his knee.*

[11] In Shakespeare's time, women's parts were acted by *unbearded* youths, or by youngsters with "Amazonian chins."

[12] This use of *lurch* has occasioned a good deal of comment. The best explanation of it that I have met with is in *The Edinburgh Review* for July, 1869: "Both noun and verb were in use among the Elizabethan writers in the sense of *seizure, robbery.* In the sense of engrossing, of seizing and carrying off with a high hand, *lurch* is also used amongst others by Bacon and Milton. To *lurch* all swords of the garland, means therefore, not only to rob all swords of the garland, but to carry it away from them with an easy and victorious swoop." The word, however, appears to have been

Before and in Corioli, let me say,
I cannot speak him home: he stopp'd the fliers;
And by his rare example made the coward
Turn terror into sport: as waves before
A vessel under sail, so men obey'd,
And fell below his stem: his sword, death's stamp,[13]
Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was timed with dying cries: [14] alone he enter'd
The mortal gate o' the city, which he painted
With shunless destiny; [15] aidless came off,
And with a sudden re-enforcement struck
Corioli like a planet.[16] Now all's his:
When, by-and-by, the din of war 'gan pierce
His ready sense; then straight his doubled spirit
Re-quicken'd what in flesh was fatigate,
And to the battle came he; where he did
Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if
'Twere a perpetual spoil; and, till we call'd
Both field and city ours, he never stood
To ease his breast with panting.

Men. Worthy man!

1 Sen. He cannot but with measure fit the honours
Which we devise him.

Com. Our spoils he kick'd at;

only another spelling of *lurk;* so that its radical sense is that of "going it on the sly" to *filch* or *steal.*

[13] The instrument with which Death *stamps* or *seals* men for his own.

[14] The cries of the dying *kept time with* every motion that he made.

[15] Stained with blood inevitably destined to flow where his sword was busy. — *Mortal* is *deadly* here, as it often is in old writers.

[16] This is well illustrated from *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3:

> Be as a *planetary* plague, when Jove
> Will o'er some high-viced city hang his poison
> In the sick air: let not thy sword skip one.

And look'd upon things precious as they were
The common muck o' the world: he covets less
Than misery[17] itself would give; rewards
His deeds with doing them; and is content
To spend the time to end it.[18]

Men. He's right noble:
Let him be call'd for.

1 Sen. Call Coriolanus.

Off. He doth appear.

Re-enter CORIOLANUS.

Men. The Senate, Coriolanus, are well pleased
To make thee Consul.

Cor. I do owe them still
My life and services.

Men. It then remains
That you do speak to th' people.

Cor. I do beseech you,
Let me o'erleap that custom; for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage: please you
That I may pass this doing.

Sic. Sir, the people
Must have their voices; neither will they bate
One jot of ceremony.

Men. Put them not to't:
Pray you, go fit you to the custom; and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honour with your form.[19]

17 *Misery* for *avarice*, as *miser* signifies *avaricious*, or *miserly*.

18 A strange expression; but probably meaning "content to end the time *in spending it*"; that is, loving valiant action for its own sake, regardless of any further considerations; and so not drawing upon the future or upon hope to sweeten his present service.

19 "*Your* form" is the form which custom prescribes to you.

Cor. It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.

Bru. [*To* SIC.] Mark you that?

Cor. To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus;
Show them th' unaching scars which I should hide,
As if I had received them for the hire
Of their breath only!—

Men. Do not stand upon't.—
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them;[20] and to our noble Consul
Wish we all joy and honour.

Senators. To Coriolanus come all joy and honour!

[*Flourish. Exeunt all but* BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS.

Bru. You see how he intends to use the people.

Sic. May they perceive's intent! He will require them,
As if he did contemn what he requested
Should be in them to give.[21]

Bru. Come, we'll inform them
Of our proceedings here: on th' market-place
I know they do attend[22] us. [*Exeunt.*

[20] Such is probably the right division of the line; though some have printed it with the (;) after *purpose*, thus connecting *to them* with what follows. But the last *to* is probably used for *towards* or *in reference to;* "our purpose *towards* them."

[21] Contemn that it should be in their power to give that which he requested. This passage shows that *require* and *request* were used synonymously. The Poet has many like instances.

[22] *Attend*, again, in the sense of *wait for*. See page 219, note 7.

SCENE III. — *The Same. The Forum.*

Enter several Citizens.

1 Cit. Once,[1] if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

2 Cit. We may, sir, if we will.

3 Cit. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do:[2] for, if he show us his wounds, and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds, and speak for them; so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous: and, for the multitude to be ingrateful, were to make a monster of the multitude; of the which we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

1 Cit. And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

3 Cit. We have been called so of many; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some abram,[3] some

[1] *Once* was sometimes used in a way that is rather puzzling to us moderns. Here it seems to mean *enough.* Staunton thinks it equivalent to *for the nonce;* but I cannot quite see that. See vol. iv. page 166, note 35.

[2] Power in the first instance here means *natural power,* or *force,* and then *moral power,* or *right.* Heath explains it thus: "We have indeed a power by law to do it, if we think proper; but this power amounts to the same as no power at all, because we should offer the greatest violence to our very natures, if we should exert it."

[3] It appears that *abram* and *abraham* were used as epithets of colour, and that the particular colour designated by them was what we call *flaxen:* how or why they came to be so used, is involved in mystery. So in *Soliman and Perseda,* 1599: "Where is the eldest sonne of Pryam, that *abraham-colour'd* Trojon? dead." And in Middleton's *Blurt, Master Constable,* 1602: "A goodlie, long, thicke, *Abram-colour'd* beard." These passages do not indeed show *what* colour the terms meant; but Shakespeare elsewhere uses the phrase "*abram* Cupid"; and that ancient roguish imp of Venus

bald, but that our wits are so diversely colour'd: and truly I think, if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south; and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' the compass.

2 Cit. Think you so? Which way do you judge my wit would fly?

3 Cit. Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's will,—'tis strongly wedged up in a blockhead; but, if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

2 Cit. Why that way?

3 Cit. To lose itself in a fog; where, being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience sake, to help to get thee a wife.

2 Cit. You are never without your tricks: you may, you may.

3 Cit. Are you all resolved to give your voices? But that's no matter, the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man. Here he comes, and in the gown of humility: mark his behaviour. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars; wherein every one of us has a single honour, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues: therefore follow me, and I'll direct you how you shall go by him.

All. Content, content. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CORIOLANUS *and* MENENIUS.

Men. O sir, you are not right: have you not known
The worthiest men have done't?

Cor. What must I say?

was usually conceived and represented as *flaxen-haired.* Some, however, identify it with *auburn;* perhaps rightly. See vol. xiii. page 154, note 3.

I pray, sir; — Plague upon't! I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace; — *look, sir; my wounds:*
I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roar'd, and ran
From th' noise of our own drums.

Men. O me, the gods!
You must not speak of that: you must desire them
To think upon you.

Cor. Think upon me! hang 'em!
I would they would forget me, like the virtues
Which our divines lose by 'em.[4]

Men. You'll mar all:
I'll leave you: pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,
In wholesome [5] manner.

Cor. Bid them wash their faces,
And keep their teeth clean. [*Exit* MENENIUS.] — So, here comes a brace. —

Re-enter two Citizens.

You know the cause, sirs, of my standing here.

1 Cit. We do, sir; tell us what hath brought you to't.

Cor. Mine own desert.

2 Cit. Your own desert!

Cor. Ay, not mine own desire.

1 Cit. How! not your own desire?

Cor. No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble the poor with begging.

[4] Probably, "the virtuous precepts which our divines lose their time in preaching to them." — This use of the term *divines* has been set down as another anachronism. No doubt it is so. And so in North's Plutarch we often find that the ancient Greeks and Romans had *bishops* among them. The Poet simply uses the language of his time to represent what has been done at all times.

[5] *Wholesome* here plainly means *agreeable* or *pleasant.*

1 Cit. You must think, if we give you any thing, we hope to gain by you.

Cor. Well, then, I pray, your price o' the consulship?

1 Cit. The price is, to ask it kindly.

Cor. Kindly! Sir, I pray, let me ha't: I have wounds to show you, which shall be yours in private.—Your good voice, sir; what say you?

2 Cit. You shall ha't, worthy sir.

Cor. A match, sir.—There's in all two worthy voices begg'd.—I have your alms: adieu.

1 Cit. But this is something odd.

2 Cit. An 'twere to give again,—but 'tis no matter.

[*Exeunt the two* Citizens.

Re-enter two other Citizens.

Cor. Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be Consul, I have here the customary gown.

3 Cit. You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

Cor. Your enigma?

3 Cit. You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends; you have not, indeed, loved the common people.

Cor. You should account me the more virtuous, that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; 'tis a condition[6] they account gentle: and, since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod, and be off to them[7] most counterfeitly; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the be-

[6] *Condition*, as usual, for *disposition* or *temper*.

[7] That is, *off with my cap* to them. See page 231, note 2.

witchment of some popular man, and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you I may be Consul.

4 Cit. We hope to find you our friend; and therefore give you our voices heartily.

3 Cit. You have received many wounds for your country.

Cor. I will not seal your knowledge [8] with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble you no further.

Both Cit. The gods give you joy, sir, heartily! [*Exeunt.*

Cor. Most sweet voices!—
Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Why in this woolvish toge [9] should I stand here,
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear
Their needless vouches? [10] Custom calls me to't.
What custom wills, in all things should we do't,
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
And mountainous error be too highly heapt
For truth t' o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,

[8] "I will not strengthen or complete your knowledge." The *sealing* is that which finishes or ratifies a writing or contract.

[9] *Toge* is a monosyllabic form of *toga*, the classical name of the civic *gown* which the Roman men wore in time of peace. Here, of course, it is what was called the *toga candida*, which was worn by those who canvassed for an office, and who were thence termed *candidati*. The *toga* was in fact made of wool; and an equivoque or double meaning was most likely intended in *woolvish*, referring both to the material of the gown and to the fact, that the speaker is in effect playing the part of a "wolf in sheep's clothing," wearing "the napless vesture of humility," while he is conscious of being any thing but humble within.

[10] He calls the "vouches" *needless*, because in his opinion an election by the Senate is or ought to be enough.—"*Hob* and *Dick*" are Roman roughs with rustic English names.—*Appear* I take to be used here as a transitive verb, having *vouches* for its object, and meaning *show*, *present*, or *offer*. Shakespeare has it repeatedly thus. In iv. 3, of this play, he uses it, accordingly, in the passive voice: "Your favour is well *appear'd* by your tongue." See, also, page 96, note 8.

Let the high office and the honour go
To one that would do thus. I am half through;
The one part suffer'd, th' other will I do.
Here come more voices. —

Re-enter three other Citizens.

Your voices: for your voices I have fought;
Watch'd for your voices; for your voices bear
Of wounds two dozen odd; battles thrice six
I've seen and heard of;[11] for your voices have
Done many things, some less, some more: your voices:
Indeed, I would be Consul.

5 Cit. He has done nobly, and cannot go without any honest man's voice.

6 Cit. Therefore let him be Consul: the gods give him joy, and make him good friend to the people!

All three Citizens. Amen, amen. — God save thee, noble Consul! [*Exeunt.*

Cor. Worthy voices!

Re-enter MENENIUS, *with* BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS.

Men. You've stood your limitation;[12] and the tribunes
Endue you with the people's voice: remains
That, in th' official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the Senate.

Cor. Is this done?

Sic. The custom of request you have discharged:
The people do admit you; and are summon'd
To meet anon, upon your approbation.

Cor. Where? at the Senate-house?

11 This, if the text be right, must mean, apparently, "I have taken part in eighteen battles, and those so considerable, that I have since heard them talked about." See Critical Notes.

12 "Your *limitation*" is your *appointment*, or *appointed time*. So the Poet repeatedly uses to *limit* for to *appoint*. See vol. xvii. page 49, note 33.

Sic. There, Coriolanus.

Cor. May I, then, change these garments?

Sic. You may, sir.

Cor. That I'll straight do; and, knowing myself again,
Repair to th' Senate-house.

Men. I'll keep you company. — Will you along?

Bru. We stay here for the people.

Sic. Fare you well. —

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS *and* MENENIUS.

He has it now; and, by his looks, methinks
'Tis warm at's heart.

Bru. With a proud heart he wore
His humble weeds. Will you dismiss the people?

Re-enter Citizens.

Sic. How now, my masters! have you chose this man?

1 Cit. He has our voices, sir.

Bru. We pray the gods he may deserve your loves.

2 Cit. Amen, sir. To my poor unworthy notion,
He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.

3 Cit. Certainly
He flouted us downright.

1 Cit. No, 'tis his kind of speech; he did not mock us.

2 Cit. Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says
He used us scornfully; he should have show'd us
His marks of merit, wounds received for's country.

Sic. Why, so he did, I'm sure.

All the Citizens. No, no; no man saw 'em.

3 Cit. He said he had wounds, which he could show in private;
And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,
I would be Consul, says he; *agèd custom*
But by your voices will not so permit me;
Your voices therefore. When we granted that,

Here was, *I thank you for your voices, — thank you, —*
Your most sweet voices: now you've left your voices,
I have no further with you. Was not this mockery?
Sic. Why either were you ignorant to see't,[13]
Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness
To yield your voices?
Bru. Could you not have told him,
As you were lesson'd, when he had no power,
But was a petty servant to the State,
He was your enemy; ever spake against
Your liberties, and the charters that you bear
I' the body of the weal; and now, arriving
A place of potency,[14] and sway o' the State,
If he should still malignantly remain
Fast foe to th' plebeii, your voices might
Be curses to yourselves? You should have said,
That as his worthy deeds did claim no less
Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature
Would think upon you for your voices, and
Translate his malice towards you into love,
Standing your friendly lord.
Sic. Thus to have said,
As you were fore-advised, had touch'd his spirit
And tried his inclination; from him pluck'd
Either his gracious promise, which you might,
As cause had call'd you up, have held him to;
Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,
Which easily endures not article
Tying him to aught; so, putting him to rage,
You should have ta'en th' advantage of his choler,
And pass'd him unelected.

13 "Why did you lack the sense to perceive it?"

14 *Arrive* was sometimes used as a transitive verb. See vol. xiv. page 17, note 25.

Bru. Did you perceive
He did solicit you in free contempt,
When he did need your loves; and do you think
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you,
When he hath power to crush? Why, had your bodies
No heart among you? or had you tongues to cry
Against the rectorship of judgment?[15]

Sic. Have you,
Ere now, denied the asker? and now again,
Of him[16] that did not ask, but mock, bestow
Your sued-for tongues?

3 Cit. He's not confirm'd; we may
Deny him yet.

2 Cit. And will deny him; I
Will have five hundred voices of that sound.

1 Cit. I twice five hundred, and their friends to piece 'em.

Bru. Get you hence instantly; and tell those friends
They've chose a Consul that will from them take
Their liberties; make them of no more voice
Than dogs, that are as often beat for barking
As they are kept to do so.

Sic. Let them assemble;
And, on a safer judgment, all revoke
Your ignorant election: enforce[17] his pride,
And his old hate unto you: besides, forget not
With what contempt he wore the humble weed;
How in his suit he scorn'd you; but your loves,

[15] Tongues to *vote* otherwise than as your judgment *counselled* or *commanded*. *Rectorship* is *rule* or *government*.

[16] "*On* him," of course. The indiscriminate use of *on* and *of* occurs frequently. See vol. xiii. page 124, note 5. Also vol. iv. page 78, note 12.

[17] *Enforce* in the sense of to *press* or *urge strongly*. So in iii. 3: "*Enforce* him with his envy to the people." And in *Julius Cæsar*, iii. 2: "Nor his offences *enforced*, for which he suffered death."

Thinking upon his services, took from you
The apprehension of his present portance,[18]
Which, gibing most ungravely, he did fashion
After th' inveterate hate he bears you.
  Bru. Lay
A fault on us, your tribunes; that we labour'd
No impediment between, but that you must
Cast your election on him.[19]
  Sic. Say you chose him
More after our commandment than as guided
By your own true affections; and that your minds,
Pre-occupied with what you rather must do
Than what you should, made you against the grain
To voice him Consul: lay the fault on us.
  Bru. Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to you,
How youngly he began to serve his country,
How long continued; and what stock he springs of,
The noble House o' the Marcians; from whence came
That Ancus Marcius, Numa's daughter's son,
Who, after great Hostilius, here was king;
Of the same House Publius and Quintus were,
That our best water brought by conduits hither;
And Censorinus, who was nobly named so,
Twice being chosen Censor by the people,
Was his great ancestor.
  Sic. One thus descended,
That hath besides well in his person wrought
To be set high in place, we did commend

[18] *Portance* is *bearing* or *behaviour*. See vol. xvii. page 181, note 13.

[19] The meaning seems to be, "we labour'd, or took pains, that there might be no obstacle or hindrance, to excuse you from voting for him." Endeavoured to have, or to leave, "no impediment between." The language is somewhat obscure. — Here we have a right piece of demagogical craft; the sneaking "wealsmen" trying to creep, underhand, into the good graces of the patricians while setting the dogs to worrying them.

To your remembrances; but you have found,
Scaling his present bearing with his past,[20]
That he's your fixèd enemy, and revoke
Your sudden approbation.

Bru. Say you ne'er had done't —
Harp on that still — but by our putting on;[21]
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to th' Capitol.

All the Citizens. We will so: almost all
Repent in their election.[22] [*Exeunt.*

Bru. Let them go on;
This mutiny were better put in hazard,
Than stay, past doubt, for greater:
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage
With their refusal, both observe and answer
The vantage of his anger.[23]

Sic. To th' Capitol, come:
We will be there before the stream o' the people;
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,
Which we have goaded onward. [*Exeunt.*

[20] Putting in the scales, that is, *weighing* or *balancing* his present conduct with his past.

[21] *Putting on* in the sense of *instigating* or *inciting*. See page 117, note 3.

[22] Repent, that is, *change their mind, in regard to* the election, or *in the midst of* it. The election is not yet legally completed.

[23] Be ready to take advantage of his anger: *meet the opportunity.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. — *Rome. A Street.*

Cornets. Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Senators, *and* Patricians.

Cor. Tullus Aufidius, then, had made new head?
Lart. He had, my lord; and that it was which caused
Our swifter composition.
Cor. So, then the Volsces stand but as at first;
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon's again.
Com. They're worn, lord Consul, so,
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.
Cor. Saw you Aufidius?
Lart. On safe-guard[1] he came to me; and did curse
Against the Volsces, for they had so vilely
Yielded the town: he is retired to Antium.
Cor. Spoke he of me?
Lart. He did, my lord.
Cor. How? what?
Lart. How often he had met you, sword to sword;
That of all things upon the Earth he hated
Your person most; that he would pawn his fortunes
To hopeless restitution,[2] so he might
Be call'd your vanquisher.
Cor. At Antium lives he?
Lart. At Antium.

[1] *On safe-guard* is, with a guard to protect him.

[2] "To hopeless restitution" means beyond the hope of restitution or recovery. Shakespeare has many like forms of expression.

Cor. I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
T' oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home.—

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o' the common mouth: I do despise them;
For they do prank them in authority,
Against all noble sufferance.

Sic. Pass no further.

Cor. Ha! what is that?

Bru. It will be dangerous to go on: no further.

Cor. What makes this change?

Men. The matter?

Com. Hath he not pass'd the nobles and the commons?

Bru. Cominius, no.

Cor. Have I had children's voices?

1 Sen. Tribunes, give way; he shall to th' market-place.

Bru. The people are incensed against him.

Sic. Stop,
Or all will fail in broil.

Cor. Are these your herd?
Must these have voices, that can yield them now,
And straight disclaim their tongues? What are your offices?
You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?
Have you not set them on?

Men. Be calm, be calm.

Cor. It is a purposed thing, and grows by plot,
To curb the will of the nobility:
Suffer't, and live with such as cannot rule,
Nor ever will be ruled.

Bru. Call't not a plot:
The people cry you mock'd them; and of late,
When corn was given them gratis, you repined;

Scandal'd the suppliants for the people; call'd them
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

Cor. Why, this was known before.

Bru. Not to them all.

Cor. Have you inform'd them sithence?[3]

Bru. How! I inform them!

Cor. You're like to do such business.

Bru. Not unlike,
Each way, to better yours.[4]

Cor. Why, then, should I be Consul? By yond clouds,
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me
Your fellow tribune.

Sic. You show too much of that
For which the people stir: if you will pass
To where you're bound, you must inquire your way,
Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit;
Or never be so noble as a Consul,
Nor yoke with him for tribune.

Men. Let's be calm.

Com. The people are abused; set on. This paltering[5]
Becomes not Rome; nor has Coriolanus
Deserved this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely
I' the plain way of his merit.[6]

[3] *Sithence* and *sith* are old forms of the temporal and causal *since*. Both were lapsing out of use in Shakespeare's time, and *since* was replacing them; but he has *sith* repeatedly, and *sithence* in one other place. Hooker uses *sith* and *sithence* a great deal; *since*, very little. See vol. iv. page 29, note 13.

[4] That is, not unlikely to better, to *surpass*, your doing, or your action, in *every* way. To which the reply is pertinent, "Why, then, should I be Consul?" The use of to *better* for to *surpass* occurs repeatedly. See vol. vii. page 216, note 19.

[5] *Paltering* is *shuffling*, *dodging*, *haggling*, or *playing fast and loose*. See vol. xvii. page 120, note 5.

[6] An allusion to bowling; a *rub* being a *hindrance*, *impediment*, or any thing that deflects the bowl from its aim.—*Falsely* is *treacherously*.—*Dishonour'd* for *dishonouring*, or *dishonourable*, either of which senses fits the context, while both are in accordance with old usage.

Cor. Tell me of corn!
This was my speech, and I will speak't again,—
Men. Not now, not now.
1 Sen. Not in this heat, sir, now.
Cor. Now, as I live, I will. My nobler friends,
I crave their pardons:
For th' mutable, rank-scented many, let them
Regard me as I do not flatter, and
Therein behold themselves.[7] I say again,
In soothing[8] them, we nourish 'gainst our Senate
The cockle[9] of rebellion, insolence, sedition,
Which we ourselves have plough'd for, sow'd, and scatter'd,
By mingling them with us, the honour'd number;
Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that
Which they have given to beggars.
Men. Well, no more.
1 Sen. No more words, we beseech you.
Cor. How! no more!
As for my country I have shed my blood,
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs
Coin words till their decay against those measles,[10]
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
The very way to catch them.
Bru. You speak o' the people,
As if you were a god to punish, not
A man of their infirmity.

[7] "Let them regard this in me, that I am no flatterer, but speak my honest thought; and let them see themselves as they are, in the glass of my plain, unflattering speech."

[8] *Soothing* is *flattering, indulging, feeding their humour.*

[9] *Cockle* is a weed which grows up and chokes the corn. The thought is from North's Plutarch: "Moreover, he said that they nourished against themselves the naughty seed and *cockle* of insolency and sedition, which had been sowed and scattered abroad among the people."

[10] *Meazel*, or *mesell*, is an old term for a *leper*.

Sic. 'Twere well
We let the people know't.
Men. What, what? his choler?
Cor. Choler!
Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,
By Jove, 'twould be my mind!
Sic. It is a mind
That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.
Cor. *Shall remain!* —
Hear you this Triton of the minnows? mark you
His absolute *shall?*
Com. 'Twas from the canon.[11]
Cor. *Shall!*
O good, but more unwise patricians! why,
You grave, but reckless Senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here[12] to choose an officer,
That with his peremptory *shall*, being but
The horn and noise o' the monster,[13] wants not spirit
To say he'll turn your current in a ditch,
And make your channel his? If they have power,
Let them have cushions by you; if none, revoke
Your dangerous lenity. If you are learned,
Be not as common fools; if you are not,
Then vail[14] your ignorance. You are plebeians,
If they be Senators: and they are no less,
When, both your voices blended, the great'st taste
Most palates theirs.[15] They choose their magistrate;

[11] That is, 'twas out of order, *diverse from the rule* of legal right.

[12] *Hydra* is what the same speaker afterwards describes as "the beast with many heads." — *Given* is here equivalent to *allowed* or *empowered:* given them the prerogative of choosing. See Critical Notes.

[13] The horn through which the beast aforesaid trumpets forth his noise.

[14] To *vail* is to *lower*, to *let fall*, to *abase*. See vol. xiv, page 156, note 19.

[15] To *palate* is commonly used with reference to the sense or organ of

And such a one as he, who puts his *shall*,
His popular *shall*, against a graver bench
Than ever frown'd in Greece. By Jove himself,
It makes the Consuls base! and my soul aches
To know, when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusion
May enter 'twixt the gap of both, and take
The one by th' other.

Com. Well; on to th' market-place.

Cor. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
The corn o' the storehouse gratis, as 'twas used
Sometime in Greece, —

Men. Well, well, no more of that.

Cor. — Though there the people had more absolute power, —
I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed
The ruin of the State.

Bru. Why, shall the people give
One, that speaks thus, their voice?

Cor. I'll give my reasons,
More worthier than their voices. They know the corn
Was not our recompense,[16] resting well assured
They ne'er did service for't. Being press'd to th' war,
Even when the naval of the State was touch'd,

taste; here, with reference to the thing tasted, or the flavour that affects the palate. I quote Mr. R. Whitelaw's happy explanation of the passage: "'The prevailing flavour of the whole smacks rather of their voice than of yours.' Judged by results, — the taste it leaves in the mouth, — this dualized government of compromise gives expression to the popular, rather than to the patrician, will: the tribunicial *nay* is stronger than the consular *yea*."

16 "*Our recompense*" would now mean the recompense *received* by us; here it means the recompense *given* by us; *our* being what is called the *subjective* genitive; that is, having reference to the *subject* or source, and not to the *object* or recipient, of the recompense. In Shakespeare's time, the objective and subjective genitives were often used indiscriminately, where such use is now obsolete. See vol. vii. page 97, note 23.

They would not thread the gates:[17] this kind of service
Did not deserve corn gratis. Being i' the war,
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd
Most valour, spoke not for them. Th' accusation
Which they have often made against the Senate,
All cause unborn, could never be the motive
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then?
How shall this bisson multitude digest
The Senate's courtesy? Let deeds express
What's like to be their words:[18] *We did request it;*
We are the greater poll,[19] *and in true fear*
They gave us our demands. Thus we debase
The nature of our seats, and make the rabble
Call our cares fears; which will in time break ope
The locks o' the Senate, and bring in the crows
To peck the eagles.

Men. Come, enough.

Bru. Enough, with over-measure.

Cor. No, take more:
What may be sworn by, both divine and human,
Seal what I end withal! This double worship,—
Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
Insult without all reason; where gentry, title, wisdom,
Cannot conclude but by the yea and no
Of general ignorance,—it must omit
Real necessities, and give way the while
T' unstable slightness: purpose so barr'd, it follows,
Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you,—
You that will be less fearful than discreet;

[17] To "*thread* the gates" is to pass through them. So in *King Richard the Second*, v. 5: "To *thread* the *postern* of a small neeld's eye."

[18] "Let their past deeds be taken as an indication of what they are likely to speak openly."

[19] *Poll* was used for *head:* here it is *number;* as to *poll* is to *count by the head.*

That love the fundamental part of State
More than you doubt[20] the change on't; that prefer
A noble life before a long, and wish
To jump[21] a body with a dangerous physic
That's sure of death without it, — at once pluck out
The multitudinous tongue; let them not lick
The sweet which is their poison: your dishonour
Mangles true judgment,[22] and bereaves the State
Of that integrity which should become't;
Not having the power to do the good it would,
For th' ill which doth control't.

Bru. 'Has said enough.

Sic. 'Has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
As traitors do.

Cor. Thou wretch, despite o'erwhelm thee! —
What should the people do with these bald[23] tribunes?
On whom depending, their obedience fails
To th' greater bench: in a rebellion,
When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
Then were they chosen: in a better hour,
Let what is meet be said it must be meet,
And throw their power i' the dust.[24]

Bru. Manifest treason!

Sic. This a Consul? no.

Bru. Th' ædiles, ho!

[20] Here, as in many other places, *doubt* is equivalent to *fear.*

[21] To *jump* is to *risk* or *hazard;* referring to the kill-or-cure treatment that is sometimes resorted to in desperate cases. — The "dangerous physic" which Coriolanus contemplates is the abolition of the tribunate; and he does not shirk the likelihood, that this will cause an earthquake in the State.

[22] "The dishonour heaped upon you hacks and maims the august form of Justice." — *Integrity,* in the next line, is *unity of purpose.* A Latinism.

[23] *Bald* is, properly, *naked, bare;* hence *empty, senseless;* as in *balderdash.* So in *1 Henry IV.*, i. 3: "This *bald,* unjointed chat of his."

[24] "Let it be said by you that what is meet to be done, *must* be meet, that is, *shall be done,* and put an end at once to the tribunitian power."

Enter an Ædile.

Let him be apprehended.

Sic. Go, call the people; [*Exit* Ædile.] — in whose name myself
Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,
A foe to th' public weal: obey, I charge thee,
And follow to thine answer.

Cor. Hence, old goat!

Sen. / *Pat.* We'll surety him.

Com. Agèd sir, hands off.

Cor. Hence, rotten thing! or I shall shake thy bones
Out of thy garments.

Sic. Help, ye citizens!

Enter a Rabble of Citizens, *with the* Ædiles.

Men. On both sides more respect.

Sic. Here's he that would take from you all your power.

Bru. Seize him, ædiles!

Citizens. Down with him! down with him!

Sen. / *Pat.* / *&c.* Weapons, weapons, weapons! —
[*They all bustle about* CORIOLANUS.
Tribunes! — Patricians! — Citizens! — What, ho! —
Sicinius! — Brutus! — Coriolanus! — Citizens! —
Peace, peace, peace! — Stay, hold, peace!

Men. What is about to be? I'm out of breath;
Confusion's near; I cannot speak. — You, tribunes,
Speak to the people; — Coriolanus, patience; —
Speak, good Sicinius.

Sic. Hear me, people; peace!

Citizens. Let's hear our tribune: peace! — Speak, speak, speak.

Sic. You are at point to lose your liberties:
Marcius would have all from you; Marcius,
Whom late you've named for Consul.

Men. Fie, fie, fie!
This is the way to kindle, not to quench.

1 Sen. T' unbuild the city, and to lay all flat.

Sic. What is the city but the people?

Citizens. True,
The people are the city.

Bru. By the consent of all, we were establish'd
The people's magistrates.

Citizens. You so remain.

Men. And so are like to do.

Cor. That is the way to lay the city flat;[25]
To bring the roof to the foundation,
And bury all, which yet distinctly rages,
In heaps and piles of ruin.

Sic. This deserves death.

Bru. Or let us stand to our authority,
Or let us lose it. — We do here pronounce,
Upon the part o' the people, in whose power
We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy
Of present death.

Sic. Therefore lay hold of him;
Bear him to th' rock Tarpeian, and from thence
Into destruction cast him.

Bru. Ædiles, seize him!

Citizens. Yield, Marcius, yield!

Men. Hear me one word:
Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.

Æd. Peace, peace!

[25] Meaning, no doubt, that retaining the Tribunes in power is "the way to lay the city flat," &c. The Tribunes naturally regard this as a treasonable assertion.

Men. Be that you seem, truly your country's friends,
And temperately proceed to what you would
Thus violently redress.

Bru. Sir, those cold ways,
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous
Where the disease is violent. — Lay hands upon him,
And bear him to the rock.

Cor. [*Drawing his sword.*] No, I'll die here.
There's some among you have beheld me fighting:
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.

Men. Down with that sword! — Tribunes, withdraw awhile.

Bru. Lay hands upon him.

Men. Help, help Marcius, help,
You that be noble; help him, young and old!

Citizens. Down with him! down with him!

[*In this mutiny the* Tribunes, *the* Ædiles,
and the People *are beat in.*

Men. Go, get you to your house; be gone, away!
All will be naught else.

2 Sen. Get you gone.

Cor. Stand fast;
We have as many friends as enemies.

Men. Shall it be put to that?

1 Sen. The gods forbid! —
I pr'ythee, noble friend, home to thy house;
Leave us to cure this cause.

Men. For 'tis a sore upon us,
You cannot tent yourself: be gone, beseech you.

Com. Come, sir, along with us.

Cor. I would they were barbarians, as they are,
Though in Rome litter'd; not Romans, as they are not,
Though calved i' the porch o' the Capitol, —

Men. Be gone;
Put not your worthy rage into your tongue;

One time will owe another.[26]
Cor. On fair ground
I could beat forty of them.
Men. I could myself take up a brace o' the best
Of them ; yea, the two tribunes.
Com. But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic ;
And manhood is call'd foolery, when it stands
Against a falling fabric. — Will you hence,
Before the tag return? whose rage doth rend
Like interrupted waters, and o'erbear
What they are used to bear.
Men. Pray you, be gone :
I'll try whether my old wit be in request
With those that have but little : this must be patch'd
With cloth of any colour.
Com. Nay, come away.
[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, *and others.*
1 Pat. This man has marr'd his fortune.
Men. His nature is too noble for the world :
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth :
What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent ;
And, being angry, does forget that ever
He heard the name of death. [*A noise within.*] Here's goodly work !
2 Pat. I would they were a-bed !
Men. I would they were in Tiber ! What, the vengeance,
Could he not speak 'em fair?

Re-enter BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS, *with the Rabble.*

Sic. Where is this viper,
That would depopulate the city, and

[26] "Our turn of success will come." Or, "another time will recompense us for the defeat and dishonour of to-day."

Be every man himself?

Men. You worthy tribunes, —

Sic. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock
With rigorous hands; he hath resisted law,
And therefore law shall scorn him further trial
Than the severity of the public power,
Which he so sets at nought.

1 Cit. He shall well know
The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,
And we their hands.

Citizens. He shall, sure on't.

Men. Sir, sir, —

Sic. Peace!

Men. Do not cry havoc,[27] where you should but hunt
With modest warrant.

Sic. Sir, how comes't that you
Have holp to make this rescue?

Men. Hear me speak:
As I do know the Consul's worthiness,
So can I name his faults, —

Sic. Consul! what Consul?

Men. The Consul Coriolanus.

Bru. He Consul!

Citizens. No, no, no, no, no.

Men. If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good people,
I may be heard, I'd crave a word or two;
The which shall turn you to no further harm
Than so much loss of time.

Sic. Speak briefly, then;
For we are peremptory to dispatch
This viperous traitor: to eject him hence

[27] *Havoc* was the signal for giving no quarter in battle; and any one who should "cry *havoc*," without authority from the commanding general, was to be punished with death. See vol. xiv. page 72, note 41.

Were but our danger; and to keep him here
Our certain death: therefore it is decreed
He dies to-night.

Men. Now the good gods forbid
That our renownèd Rome, whose gratitude
Towards her deservèd[28] children is enroll'd
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam
Should now eat up her own!

Sic. He's a disease that must be cut away.

Men. O, he's a limb that has but a disease;
Mortal, to cut it off; to cure it, easy.
What has he done to Rome that's worthy death?
Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost —
Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath,
By many an ounce — he dropp'd it for his country;
And what is left, to lose it by his country,
Were to us all, that do't and suffer it,
A brand to th' end o' the world.

Sic. This is clean kam.[29]

Bru. Merely[30] awry: when he did love his country,
It honour'd him.

Men. The service of the foot
Being once gangrened, is not then respected
For what before it was.[31]

[28] *Deserved* for *deserving;* an instance of the indiscriminate use of active and passive forms so common in Shakespeare. I have noted many such cases. See vol. xv. page 21, note 45.

[29] *All wrong;* the same as "merely awry" in the next line. *Kam* is an old word for *crooked;* thus explained by Cotgrave: "All goes cleane contrarie, quite *kamme*." *Clean kam* appears to have been corrupted into *kim-kam;* of which word Holland's Plutarch furnishes several instances: "First mark, I beseech you, the comparison, how they go clean *kim-kam*, and against the stream, as if rivers run up hills."

[30] *Merely*, here, is *utterly* or *absolutely*. Often so.

[31] Here Menenius is probably to be understood as urging the logical consequences of the Tribune's position, by way of refuting it.

Bru. We'll hear no more.—
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence;
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.
Men. One word more, one word.
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find
The harm of unscann'd[32] swiftness, will, too late,
Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by process;
Lest parties — as he is beloved — break out,
And sack great Rome with Romans.
Bru. If't were so,—
Sic. What do ye talk?
Have we not had a taste of his obedience?
Our ædiles smote?[33] ourselves resisted?—Come,—
Men. Consider this: He has been bred i' the wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd
In bolted language; meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form,—
In peace,—to's utmost peril.
1 Sen. Noble tribunes,
It is the húmane way: the other course
Will prove too bloody; and the end of it
Unknown to the beginnning.
Sic. Noble Menenius,
Be you, then, as the people's officer.—
Masters, lay down your weapons.
Bru. Go not home.
Sic. Meet on the market-place.—We'll attend you there;

[32] *Unscann'd* here means *heedless, inconsiderate, rash.*

[33] The writers of Shakespeare's time did not much mind the classical pronunciation of Greek and Latin names. So, here, *Ædiles* is used as a word of two syllables. The same once, if not twice, before in this scene.

Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed
In our first way.

Men. I'll bring him to you. — [*To the* Senators.] Let me
Desire your company: he must come, or what
Is worst will follow.

1 Sen. Pray you, let us to him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. — *A Room in* CORIOLANUS'S *House.*

Enter CORIOLANUS *and* Patricians.

Cor. Let them pull all about mine ears; present me
Death on the wheel or at wild horses' heels;
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
That the precipitation might down stretch
Below the beam of sight; yet will I still
Be thus to them.

1 Pat. You do the nobler.

Cor. I muse[1] my mother
Does not approve me further, who was wont
To call them woollen vassals,[2] things created
To buy and sell with groats; to show bare heads
In congregations; to yawn, be still, and wonder,
When one but of my ordinance[3] stood up
To speak of peace or war. —

Enter VOLUMNIA.

I talk of you:
Why did you wish me milder? would you have me
False to my nature? Rather say, I play
Truly the man I am.

[1] *Muse* for *wonder;* a frequent usage. See vol. xvii. page 73, note 12.

[2] That is, wretches, or loafers, unfit for war, and good for nothing but to wear the cowardly toga. See page 242, note 9.

[3] *Ordinance* is here used, apparently, for *order* or *rank.*

Vol. O, sir, sir, sir,[4]
I would have had you put your power well on,
Before you had worn it out.

Cor. Let go.

Vol. You might have been enough the man you are,
With striving less to be so: lesser had been
The thwartings of your disposition, if
You had not show'd them how ye were disposed
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

Cor. Let them hang.

Vol. Ay, and burn too.

Enter MENENIUS *and* Senators.

Men. Come, come, you've been too rough, something too rough;
You must return and mend it.

1 Sen. There's no remedy;
Unless, by not so doing, our good city
Cleave in the midst, and perish.

Vol. Pray, be counsell'd:
I have a heart as tickle-apt [5] as yours,

[4] Dyce aptly suggests that the use of *sir, sir, sir* may be meant as a mild, but significant note of displeasure at the hero's conduct: "one of Shakespeare's touches of nature."

[5] As dangerous to meddle with; as sensitive; as apt to explode if stirred, or to fire up if touched with provocation. The Poet has *tickle* repeatedly in a kindred sense. See vol. xiv. page 203, note 43. So in North's Plutarch: "Some men feared lest he would bring all the city in an uproar, considering it stood then but in very *tickle* terms." And in Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, iii. 1: "Courtiers are but *tickle* things to deal withal." Also in Holland's Pliny: "For who knoweth not, that in frost it is *ticklish* medling with vines, and that they be in daunger soone to breake and knap asunder." Still more to the purpose is a passage in Chapman's *Byron's Conspiracy*, 1608:

Colonel Williams,
A worthy captain, would compare with him,
And hold his swelling valor to the mark;

But yet a brain that leads my use of anger
To better vantage.

Men. Well said, noble woman!
Before he should thus stoop to th' herd, but that
The violent fit o' the time craves it as physic
For the whole State, I'd put mine armour on,
Which I can scarcely bear.

Cor. What must I do?

Men. Return to th' tribunes.

Cor. Well, what then? what then?

Men. Repent what you have spoke.

Cor. For them? I cannot do it to the gods;
Must I, then, do't to them?

Vol. You are too absolute;
Though therein you can never be too noble,
But when extremities speak. I've heard you say,
Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,
I' the war do grow together: grant that, and tell me,
In peace what each of them by th' other lose,
That they combine not there.

Cor. Tush, tush!

Men. A good demand.

Vol. If it be honour in your wars to seem
The same you are not, — which, for your best ends,
You adopt your policy, — how is it less or worse,
That it shall hold companionship in peace
With honour, as in war; since that to both
It stands in like request?

Cor. Why force you this?

And, as in open vessels fill'd with water,
And on men's shoulders borne, they put treen cups,
To keep the wild and slippery element
From washing over; follow all his sways
And *tickle-aptness to exceed his bounds*,
And in the brim contain him.

Vol. Because that now it lies you on[6] to speak
To th' people; not by your own instruction,
Nor by the matter which your own heart prompts you,
But with such words that are but roted in
Your tongue, thought's bastards, and but syllables
Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.[7]
Now, this no more dishonours you at all
Than to take-in[8] a town with gentle words,
Which else would put you to your fortune, and
The hazard of much blood.
I would dissemble with my nature, where
My fortunes and my friends at stake required
I should do so in honour: I am in this,
Your wife, your son,[9] these Senators, the nobles;
And you will rather show our general louts
How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,
For the inheritance of their loves, and safeguard
Of what that want[10] might ruin.

[6] "It lies you on," or "it stands you on," is an old phrase for "it is *incumbent* on you," or "it is your part and duty." See vol. xiv. p. 302, n. 14.

[7] *Allowance* is here used in the old sense of to *allow*, that is, to *justify* or *approve;* as in Psalm xi. of the Psalter: "The Lord *alloweth* the righteous." Also in many other places of the English Bible. Shakespeare has *allowance* repeatedly in the same sense; as in *King Lear*, i. 4: "That you protect this course, and put it on by your *allowance*." — The best explanation of the passage in the text, that I have met with, is furnished me by Mr. Joseph Crosby: "Truth sits enthroned on your bosom, to sanction your thoughts and language: but, in the present case, your words will be but illegitimate offspring, not born of your heart, having no approval or justification from that truth; but merely roted in your *tongue*, — spoken, as a parrot or child talks, *by rote*." A verse from Psalm cxxxix., of the Psalter, is not irrelevant here: "There is not a *word in my tongue*, but Thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether."

[8] *Take-in*, again, in the sense of *capture* or *subdue*. See page 198, note 5.

[9] Meaning, apparently, "I am in, or *of*, this *mind; so is* your wife, your son," &c. Or the sense may be, "I am, in this, your wife"; that is, "in this advice I express the thought of your wife," &c.

[10] *That want* is *the want of that*, namely, "their loves."

Men. Noble lady! —
Come, go with us; speak fair: you may salve so,
Not [11] what is dangerous present, but the loss
Of what is past.
Vol. I pr'ythee now, my son,
Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand;
And — thus far having stretch'd it, (here be with them,)
Thy knee bussing the stones, (for in such business
Action is eloquence, and th' eyes of th' ignorant
More learnèd than the ears,) waving thy head,
Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
Bow, humble as the ripest mulberry
That will not hold the handling — say to them,
Thou art their soldier, and, being bred in broils,
Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,
Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim,
In asking their good loves; but thou wilt frame
Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
As thou hast power and person.
Men. This but done,
Even as she speaks it, why, their hearts were yours;
For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free
As words to little purpose.
Vol. Pr'ythee now,
Go, and be ruled: although I know thou hadst rather
Follow thine enemy in [12] a fiery gulf
Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius.

Enter COMINIUS.

Com. I've been i' the market-place; and, sir, 'tis fit
You make strong party, or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence: all's in anger.

[11] *Not* is here equivalent to *not only*.

[12] Here, again, *in* has the sense of *into*. See page 197, note 1.

Men. Only fair speech.
Com. I think 'twill serve, if he
Can thereto frame his spirit.
Vol. He must, and will. —
Pr'ythee now, say you will, and go about it.
Cor. Must I go show them my unbarbèd sconce?[13]
Must I with my base tongue give to my heart
A lie that it must bear? Well, I will do't:
Yet, were there but this single plot[14] to lose,
This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it,
And throw't against the wind. — To th' market-place! —
You've put me now to such a part, which never
I shall discharge to th' life.
Com. Come, come, we'll prompt you.
Vol. I pr'ythee now, sweet son, as thou hast said
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
To have my praise for this, perform a part
Thou hast not done before.
Cor. Well, I must do't:
Away my disposition, and possess me
Some harlot's spirit! my throat of war be turn'd,

[13] The Poet repeatedly uses *sconce* for *head.* — *Unbarbed* is explained by Dyce and some others as *unshorn, untrimmed;* which can hardly be right, as the speech clearly refers, not to personal appearance, but to the customary signs of deference and humility, one of which was standing bare-headed, and bowing in a lowly manner to the assembled citizens. And so *The Edinburgh Review* for October, 1872, shows conclusively, in a passage too long for quotation here, that *barbe* was often used for any head-covering; the writer adding that "to show an unbarbed sconce is to show an uncovered, unprotected sconce; in other words, to appear bare-headed." This accords with what Volumnia has just said to her son: "Go to them, with this *bonnet in thy hand.*" — In the next line, "my *base* tongue" is a clear instance of prolepsis; meaning tongue *that will be* base, if he uses it in the way proposed. The Poet has a good many such proleptical forms of speech. See vol. xi. page 262, note 1.

[14] *Plot* is piece, portion, applied to a piece of earth, and here transferred to the body.

Which quirèd with my drum,[15] into a pipe
Small as an eunuch's, or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep! [16] the smiles of knaves
Tent in my cheeks; and schoolboys' tears take up
The glasses of my sight! a beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips; and my arm'd knees,
Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath received an alms! — I will not do't;
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,
And by my body's action teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.

Vol. At thy choice, then:
To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin: let
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear
Thy dangerous stoutness; [17] for I mock at death
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me;
But owest thy pride thyself.

Cor. Pray, be content:
Mother, I'm going to the market-place;
Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,
Cog[18] their hearts from them, and come home beloved
Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going:
Commend me to my wife. I'll return Consul;

[15] Which *played in concert* with my drum. So in *The Merchant of Venice:* "Still *quiring* to the young-eyed cherubins."

[16] White notes *virgin* here as an "infelicitous use of epithet." I cannot conceive why, unless on the ground that virgins never use their voice in singing lullaby to other people's children. Do none but mothers lull babies asleep?

[17] The meaning probably is, "let me suffer the worst that thy pride can bring upon me, rather than thus live in fear of what will grow from thy obstinacy."

[18] To *mountebank* is, here, to *play the conjurer.* — To *cog* is to *cheat*, to *wheedle*, to *lie*. See vol. xv. page 281, note 7.

Or never trust to what my tongue can do
I' the way of flattery further.
Vol. Do your will. [*Exit.*
Com. Away! the tribunes do attend you:[19] arm yourself
To answer mildly; for they are prepared
With accusations, as I hear, more strong
Than are upon you yet.
Cor. The word is *mildly.* — Pray you, let us go:
Let them accuse me by invention, I
Will answer in mine honour.
Men. Ay, but mildly.
Cor. Well, mildly be it, then; mildly! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. — *Same. The Forum.*

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

Bru. In this point charge him home, that he affects
Tyrannical power: if he evade us there,
Enforce him with his envy[1] to the people;
And that the spoil got on the Antiates
Was ne'er distributed. —

Enter an Ædile.

What, will he come?
Æd. He's coming.
Bru. How accompanied!
Æd. With old Menenius, and those Senators
That always favour'd him.
Sic. Have you a catalogue
Of all the voices that we have procured,
Set down by th' poll?

[19] Here, again, *attend* is *wait for* or *await.* See page 219, note 7.
[1] *Envy* is *hatred* or *malice* here, as commonly in Shakespeare.

Æd. I have; 'tis ready here.
Sic. Have you collected them by tribes?
Æd. I have.
Sic. Assemble presently the people hither:
And, when they hear me say, *It shall be so*
I' the right and strength o' the commons, be it either
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
If I say fine, cry *Fine;* if death, cry *Death;*
Insisting on the old prerogative
And power i' the truth o' the cause.
Æd. I shall inform them.
Bru. And, when such time they have begun to cry,
Let them not cease, but with a din confused
Enforce the present execution
Of what we chance to sentence.
Æd. Very well.
Sic. Make them be strong, and ready for this hint,
When we shall hap to give't them.
Bru. Go about it.—[*Exit* Ædile.
Put him to choler straight: he hath been used
Ever to conquer, and to have his word
Of contradiction: being once chafed, he cannot
Be rein'd again to temperance; then he speaks
What's in his heart; and that is there which looks
With us to break his neck.[2]
Sic. Well, here he comes.

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, Senators, *and* Patricians.

Men. Calmly, I do beseech you.
Cor. Ay, as an ostler, that for th' poorest piece
Will bear the knave by th' volume.[3]—Th' honour'd gods

[2] "That which, with the use that we shall make of it, *tends*, or *is likely*, to break his neck"; that is, hurl him from the Tarpeian rock.

[3] Bear being called a knave as many times as would fill a volume.

Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among's!
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
And not our streets with war!

1 Sen. Amen, amen!

Men. A noble wish!

Re-enter Ædile, *with* Citizens.

Sic. Draw near, ye people.

Æd. List to your tribunes; audience! peace, I say!

Cor. First hear me speak.

Both Tri. Well, say. — Peace, ho!

Cor. Shall I be charged no further than this present?
Must all determine here?

Sic. I do demand,
If you submit you to the people's voices,
Allow their officers, and are content
To suffer lawful censure for such faults
As shall be proved upon you?

Cor. I'm content.

Men. Lo, citizens, he says he is content:
The warlike service he has done, consider; think
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show
Like graves i' the holy churchyard.

Cor. Scratches with briers,
Scars to move laughter only.

Men. Consider further,
That when he speaks not like a citizen,
You find him like a soldier: do not take
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,
But, as I say, such as become a soldier,
Rather than envy you.[4]

[4] "Rather than such as spring from a purpose to *malign* or *spite* you."

Com. Well, well, no more.
Cor. What is the matter,
That, being pass'd for Consul with full voice,
I'm so dishonour'd, that the very hour
You take it off again?
Sic. Answer to us.
Cor. Say, then; 'tis true, I ought so.
Sic. We charge you, that you have contrived to take
From Rome all season'd office, and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical;
For which you are a traitor to the people.
Cor. How! traitor!
Men. Nay, temperately; your promise.
Cor. The fires i' the lowest Hell fold-in the people!
Call me their traitor? Thou injurious tribune!
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say
Thou liest unto thee with a voice as free
As I do pray the gods.
Sic. Mark you this, people?
Citizens. To th' rock, to th' rock with him!
Sic. Peace!
We need not put new matter to his charge:
What you have seen him do and heard him speak,
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,
Opposing laws with strokes, and here defying
Those whose great power must try him; even this
So criminal, and in such capital kind,
Deserves th' extremest death.
Bru. But, since he hath
Served well for Rome, —
Cor. What do you prate of service?
Bru. I talk of that that know it.

Cor. You!
Men. Is this the promise that you made your mother?
Com. Know, I pray you, —
Cor. I'll know no further:
Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger
But with a grain a day, I would not buy
Their mercy at the price of one fair word;
Nor check my courage[5] for what they can give,
To have't with saying *Good morrow.*
Sic. For that he has,
As much as in him lies, from time to time
Inveigh'd against the people, seeking means
To pluck away their power; as[6] now at last
Given hostile strokes, and that not[7] in the presence
Of dreadful justice, but on the ministers
That do distribute it; in the name o' the people,
And in the power of us the tribunes, we,
Even from this instant, banish him our city;
In peril of precipitation
From off the rock Tarpeian, never more
To enter our Rome gates: i' the people's name,
I say it shall be so.
Citizens. It shall be so,
It shall be so; let him away: he's banish'd,
And it shall be so.
Com. Hear me, my masters and my common friends, —
Sic. He's sentenced; no more hearing.

[5] *Courage* must here be taken in the sense of *spirit* or *resolution;* there being no apparent reason why Coriolanus should here speak of his *bravery*, as the people have not made this any ground of complaint.

[6] *As* may here signify *as well as:* such elliptical modes of expression are not uncommon in Shakespeare.

[7] *Not* is here again used for *not only.* See page 268, note 11.

Com. Let me speak:
I have been Consul, and can show for Rome
Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love
My country's good with a respect more tender,
More holy, and profound, than mine own life,
My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,
And treasure of my loins; then if I would
Speak that, —

Sic. We know your drift: speak what?

Bru. There's no more to be said, but he is banish'd,
As enemy to the people and his country:
It shall be so.

Citizens. It shall be so, it shall be so.

Cor. You common cry of curs![8] whose breath I hate
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air, I banish you:
And here remain with your uncertainty!
Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts!
Your enemies, wi' th' nodding of their plumes,
Fan you into despair! Have the power still
To banish your defenders; till at length
Your ignorance, which finds not till it feels,
Making but reservation of yourselves,[9]
Still your own foes, deliver you, as most
Abated[10] captives, to some nation

[8] *Cry* here signifies a *pack.* So in a subsequent scene: "You have made good work, you and your *cry.*" A *cry* of hounds was the old term for a *pack.* See vol. xiv. page 236, note 42.

[9] Coriolanus imprecates upon the plebeians that they may still retain the power of banishing their *defenders*, till their undiscerning folly, which can foresee no consequences, leave none in the city *but themselves;* so that, for want of those capable of conducting their defence, they may fall an easy prey to some nation who may conquer them without a struggle.

[10] *Abated* is *overthrown, depressed.* To *abate* castles and houses, is to

That won you without blows! Despising, then,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back:
There is a world elsewhere.[11]

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, MENENIUS, Senators, *and* Patricians.

Æd. The people's enemy is gone, is gone!

Citizens. Our enemy is banish'd! he is gone!
Hoo! hoo! [*Shouting, and throwing up their caps.*

Sic. Go, see him out at gates, and follow him,
As he hath follow'd you, with all despite;
Give him deserved vexation. Let a guard
Attend us through the city.

Citizens. Come, come, let's see him out at gates; come, come;—
The gods preserve our noble tribunes!—come. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.— *Rome. Before a Gate of the City.*

Enter CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, *and several young* Patricians.

Cor. Come, leave your tears; a brief farewell: the beast
With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother,
Where is your ancient courage? you were used

overthrow them. To *abate* the courage of a man was to *depress* or *diminish* it. See vol. iv. page 36, note 3.

[11] It is remarkable that, among the political maxims of the speculative Harrington, there is one that he might have borrowed from this speech: "*The people cannot see, but they can feel.*" It is not much to the honour of the people, that they have the same character of stupidity from their enemy and their friend. Such was the power of our author's mind, that he looked through life in all its relations private and civil.—JOHNSON.

To say extremity was the trier of spirits;
That common chances common men could bear;
That, when the sea was calm, all boats alike
Show'd mastership in floating; fortune's blows
When most struck home, being gentle-minded craves
A noble cunning:[1] you were used to load me
With precepts that would make invincible
The heart that conn'd them.

Vir. O Heavens! O Heavens!

Cor. Nay, I pr'ythee, woman,—

Vol. Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,
And occupations[2] perish!

Cor. What, what, what!
I shall be loved when I am lack'd. Nay, mother,
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,
If you had been the wife of Hercules,
Six of his labours you'd have done, and saved
Your husband so much sweat.—Cominius,
Droop not; adieu.—Farewell, my wife,—my mother:
I'll do well yet.—Thou old and true Menenius,
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's,
And venomous to thine eyes.—My sometime general,
I've seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
Heart-hardening spectacles: tell these sad women,
'Tis fond[3] to wail inevitable strokes,
As 'tis to laugh at 'em.—My mother, you wot well
My hazards still have been your solace: and

[1] "When fortune's blows are most struck home, to bear them with a sweet and quiet mind requires a noble *wisdom*." *Cunning* was often used for *wisdom* or *skill*. "*Being* gentle-minded" has the force of "*to be* gentle-minded"; the participle for the infinitive.

[2] *Occupation* is used repeatedly by Shakespeare for *trade*, the trade of mechanics and artisans. So in a subsequent scene: "You that stood so much upon the voice of *occupation*, and the breath of garlic-eaters."

[3] Here, as usual in Shakespeare, *fond* is *foolish*.

Believe't not lightly, — though I go alone,
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen [4]
Makes fear'd and talk'd of more than seen, — your son
Will or exceed the common, or be caught
With cautelous [5] baits and practice.

Vol. My fair son,
Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius
With thee awhile: determine on some course,
More than a wild exposure to each chance
That starts i' the way before thee.

Cor. O the gods!

Com. I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us,
And we of thee: so, if the time thrust forth
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send
O'er the vast world to seek a single man;
And lose advantage, which doth ever cool
I' the absence of the needer.

Cor. Fare ye well:
Thou'st years upon thee; and thou art too full
Of the wars' surfeits, to go rove with one
That's yet unbruised: bring me but out at gate. —
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and
My friends of noble touch; [6] when I am forth,
Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come.
While I remain above the ground, you shall
Hear from me still: and never of me aught

[4] The *fen* is the dragon's pestilential abode, which is talked of and shunned.

[5] *Cautelous* is *crafty*, *subtle*, *insidious*. Warburton says that *cautel* "signified only a prudent foresight or caution, but, passing through French hands, it lost its innocence, and now signifies fraud, deceit." — *Common*, in the preceding line, has *hazards* understood.

[6] Of *true metal*. The metaphor from the touchstone for trying metals is common in Shakespeare.

But what is like me formerly.

Men. That's worthily
As any ear can hear. — Come, let's not weep. —
If I could shake off but one seven years
From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,
I'd with thee every foot.

Cor. Give me thy hand:
Come. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. — *The Same. A Street near the Gate.*

Enter Sicinius, Brutus, *and an* Ædile.

Sic. Bid them all home; he's gone, and we'll no further.
The nobility are vex'd, who we see have sided
In his behalf.

Bru. Now we have shown our power,
Let us seem humbler after it is done
Than when it was a-doing.

Sic. Bid them home:
Say their great enemy is gone, and they
Stand in their ancient strength.

Bru. Dismiss them home. [*Exit* Ædile.
Here comes his mother.

Sic. Let's not meet her.

Bru. Why?

Sic. They say she's mad.

Bru. They have ta'en note of us: keep on your way.

Enter Volumnia, Virgilia, *and* Menenius.

Vol. O, ye're well met: the hoarded plagues o' the gods
Requite your love![1]

[1] We have a like imprecation in *King Lear*, ii. 4: "All the *stored vengeances* of Heaven fall on her ingrateful top!"

Men. Peace, peace! be not so loud.

Vol. If that I could for weeping, you should hear,—
Nay, and you shall hear some.—[*To* BRUTUS.] Will you be gone?

Vir. [*To* SICINIUS.] You shall stay too: I would I had the power
To say so to my husband.

Sic. Are you mankind?[2]

Vol. Ay, fool; is that a shame? Note but this fool:
Was not a man my father? Hadst thou foxship
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome
That thou hast spoken words?—

Sic. O blessèd Heavens!

Vol. More noble blows than ever thou wise words;
And for Rome's good. I'll tell thee what;—yet go;—
Nay, but thou shalt stay too: I would my son
Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,
His good sword in his hand.

Sic. What then?

Vol. What then!
He'd make an end of thy posterity,
Bastards and all. Good man, the wounds that he
Does bear for Rome!

Men. Come, come, peace!

Sic. I would he had continued to his country
As he began, and not unknit himself
The noble knot he made.

Bru. I would he had.

Vol. *I would he had!* 'Twas you incensed the rabble;
Cats,[3] that can judge as fitly of his worth

[2] "Are you a *man?*" implying, of course, that she is somewhat viraginous. She kills the insult by ignoring it, choosing to understand him as asking whether she be human. See vol. vii. page 179, note 8.

[3] *Cats* is probably used of the Tribunes, not of the rabble, "*Ye* cats."

As I can of those mysteries which Heaven
Will not have Earth to know.

Bru. Pray, let us go.

Vol. Now, pray, sir, get you gone:
You've done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this:
As far as doth the Capitol exceed
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son, —
This lady's husband here, this, do you see, —
Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.

Bru. Well, well, we'll leave you.

Sic. Why stay we to be baited
With one that wants her wits?[4]

Vol. Take my prayers with you. —
[*Exeunt* Tribunes.
I would the gods had nothing else to do
But to confirm my curses! Could I meet 'em[5]
But once a-day, it would unclog my heart
Of what lies heavy to't.

Men. You've told them home;
And, by my troth, you've cause. You'll sup with me?

Vol. Anger's my meat; I sup upon myself,
And so shall starve with feeding. — Come, let's go:
Leave this faint puling, and lament as I do,
In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.

Men. Fie, fie, fie!
[*Exeunt.*

[4] *Baited* is *barked at* or *worried*, as a bear by dogs. See vol. vii. page 180, note 12. — "Baited *with* one" is old language for "baited *by* one."

[5] "Could I meet the *tribunes*, and curse them"; not meet the *gods*.

SCENE III. — *A Highway between Rome and Antium.*

Enter a Roman *and a* Volsce, *meeting.*

Rom. I know you well, sir, and you know me: your name, I think, is Adrian.

Vols. It is so, sir: truly, I have forgot you.

Rom. I am a Roman; and my services are, as you are, against 'em: know you me yet?

Vols. Nicanor? no.

Rom. The same, sir.

Vols. You had more beard when I last saw you; but your favour is well appear'd by your tongue.[1] What's the news in Rome? I have a note from the Volscian State, to find you out there: you have well saved me a day's journey.

Rom. There hath been in Rome strange insurrections; the people against the Senators, patricians, and nobles.

Vols. Hath been! is it ended, then? Our State thinks not so: they are in a most warlike preparation, and hope to come upon them in the heat of their division.

Rom. The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would make it flame again; for the nobles receive so to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus, that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from the people, and to pluck from them their tribunes for ever. This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

Vols. Coriolanus banish'd!

Rom. Banish'd, sir.

Vols. You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor.

Rom. The day serves well for them now. I have heard

1 That is, "your *person* is well *shown* or *made apparent* by your *voice.*" The verb to *appear* is used repeatedly by the Poet in this way. See page 242, note 10.

it said, the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fallen out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country.

Vols. He cannot choose. I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you: you have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

Rom. I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome; all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you?

Vols. A most royal one; the centurions and their charges, distinctly billeted, already in the entertainment,[2] and to be on foot at an hour's warning.

Rom. I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

Vols. You take my part from me, sir; I have the most cause to be glad of yours.

Rom. Well, let us go together. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. — *Antium. Before* AUFIDIUS'S *House.*

Enter CORIOLANUS *in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.*

Cor. A goodly city is this Antium. — City,
'Tis I that made thy widows: many an heir
Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars
Have I heard groan and drop: then know me not;
Lest that thy wives with spits, and boys with stones,
In puny battle slay me. —

[2] "In the entertainment" is taken into the service, and on pay. — "*Distinctly* billeted" is assigned quarters, or lodgings, *separately;* each company by itself. See vol. xvii. page 220, note 34.

Enter a Citizen.

Save you, sir.

Cit. And you.

Cor. Direct me, if it be your will,
Where great Aufidius lies: is he in Antium?

Cit. He is, and feasts the nobles of the State
At his house this night.

Cor. Which is his house, beseech you?

Cit. This, here, before you.

Cor. Thank you, sir: farewell.—
[*Exit* Citizen.
O world, thy slippery turns! Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,
Whose house, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,
Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love
Unseparable, shall within this hour,
On a dissension of a doit, break out
To bitterest enmity: so, fellest foes,
Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep
To take the one the other, by some chance,
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends,
And interjoin their issues. So with me:
My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon
This enemy's town. I'll enter: if he slay me,
He does fair justice; if he give me way,
I'll do his country service. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.—*The Same. A Hall in* AUFIDIUS'S *House.*

Music within. Enter a Servant.

1 Serv. Wine, wine, wine!—What service is here! I think our fellows are asleep. [*Exit.*

Enter a second Servant.

2 Serv. Where's Cotus? my master calls for him. — Cotus! [*Exit.*

Enter CORIOLANUS.

Cor. A goodly house: the feast smells well; but I
Appear not like a guest.

Re-enter the first Servant.

1 Serv. What would you have, friend? whence are you? Here's no place for you: pray, go to the door. [*Exit.*

Cor. I have deserved no better entertainment
In being Coriolanus.[1]

Re-enter the second Servant.

2 Serv. Whence are you, sir? — Has the porter no eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such companions? — Pray, get you out.

Cor. Away!

2 Serv. Away! get you away.

Cor. Now thou'rt troublesome.

2 Serv. Are you so brave? I'll have you talk'd with anon.

Enter a third Servant.

3 Serv. What fellow's this?

2 Serv. A strange one as ever I look'd on: I cannot get him out o' the house: pr'ythee, call my master to him.

3 Serv. What have you to do here, fellow? Pray you avoid the house.

Cor. Let me but stand; I will not hurt your hearth.

3 Serv. What are you?

Cor. A gentleman.

3 Serv. A marvellous poor one.

1 In having gained that surname by the capture of Corioli.

Cor. True, so I am.

3 Serv. Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other station; here's no place for you; pray you, avoid: come.

Cor. Follow your function, go, and batten [2] on cold bits.
[*Pushes him away.*

3 Serv. What, you will not?—Pr'ythee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here.

2 Serv. And I shall. [*Exit.*

3 Serv. Where dwellest thou?

Cor. Under the canopy.

3 Serv. Under the canopy!

Cor. Ay.

3 Serv. Where's that?

Cor. I' the city of kites and crows.

3 Serv. I' the city of kites and crows!—What an ass it is!—Then thou dwell'st with daws too?

Cor. No, I serve not thy master.

Serv. How, sir! do you meddle with my master?

Cor. Ay; 'tis honester service than to meddle with thy mistress:
Thou pratest, and pratest; serve with thy trencher, hence!
[*Beats him in.*

Enter AUFIDIUS *with the second* Servant.

Auf. Where is this fellow?

2 Serv. Here, sir: I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within. [*The two* Servants *retire.*

Auf. Whence comest thou? what wouldest thou? thy name?
Why speak'st not? speak, man: what's thy name?

Cor. [*Unmuffling.*] If, Tullus,
Not yet thou knowest me, and, seeing me, dost not

[2] To *batten* is to *feed coarsely* or *grossly*. So in *Hamlet*, iii. 4: "Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed, and *batten* on this moor?"

Think me the man I am, necessity
Commands me name myself.
Auf. What is thy name?
Cor. A name unmusical to th' Volscians' ears,
And harsh in sound to thine.
Auf. Say, what's thy name?
Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face
Bears a command in't; though thy tackle's torn,
Thou show'st a noble vessel: what's thy name?
Cor. Prepare thy brow to frown. Know'st thou me yet?
Auf. I know thee not: thy name?
Cor. My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done
To thee particularly and to all the Volsces
Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus: the painful service,
The éxtreme dangers, and the drops of blood
Shed for my thankless country, are requited
But with that surname; a good memory,[3]
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou shouldst bear me. Only that name remains:
The cruelty and envy of the people,
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who
Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest;
And suffer'd me by th' voice of slaves to be
Whoop'd out of Rome. Now, this extremity
Hath brought me to thy hearth; not out of hope —
Mistake me not — to save my life; for, if
I had fear'd death, of all the men i' the world
I would have 'voided thee; but in mere spite,
To be full quit[4] of those my banishers,
Stand I before thee here. Then, if thou hast

[3] *Memory* is here used for *memorial* or *reminder;* that which recalls to memory. A frequent usage. See vol. xv. page 135, note 2.

[4] *Quit* for *quited*, and in the sense of *requited;* that is *avenged.*

A heart of wreak[5] in thee, that will revenge
Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those maims
Of shame[6] seen through thy country, speed thee straight,
And make my misery serve thy turn: so use it,
That my revengeful services may prove
As benefits to thee; for I will fight
Against my canker'd[7] country with the spleen
Of all the under fiends. But, if so be
Thou darest not this, and that to prove more fortunes
Thou'rt tired, then, in a word, I also am
Longer to live most weary, and present
My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice;
Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,
Since I have ever follow'd thee with hate,
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
It be to do thee service.

Auf. O Marcius, Marcius!
Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart
A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter
Should from out yonder cloud speak divine things,
And say *'Tis true*, I'd not believe him more
Than thee, all-noble Marcius. Let me twine
Mine arms about that body, where-against
My grainèd ash an hundred times hath broke,
And scarr'd the Moon with splinters:[8] here I clip

[5] *Wreak* is an old term for *revenge*. So in *Titus Andronicus:* "Take *wreak* on Rome for this ingratitude."

[6] "Maims of shame" is shameful maims; probably meaning disreputable losses of territory.

[7] Shakespeare uses *canker*, noun and verb, in four distinct senses. I am not quite clear in what sense it is used here; probably in that of a malignant sore, like *cancer*. See vol. xiii. page 127, note 11.

[8] The idea, or the expression, of *scarring* the Moon is hyperbolical enough. We have a like expression in *King Richard III.*, v. 3: "*Amaze the welkin* with your *broken staves*." See Critical Notes.

The anvil of my sword;[9] and do contest
As hotly and as nobly with thy love
As ever in ambitious strength I did
Contend against thy valour. Know, thou first,[10]
I loved the maid I married; never man
Sigh'd truer breath: but, that I see thee here,
Thou noble thing! more dances my rapt heart
Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars! I tell thee,
We have a power on foot; and I had purpose
Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,
Or lose mine arm for't: thou hast beat me out[11]
Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me;
We have been down together in my sleep,
Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,
And waked half dead with nothing. Worthy Marcius,
Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that
Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all
From twelve to seventy; and, pouring war
Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
Like a bold flood o'er-bear. O, come, go in,
And take our friendly Senators by th' hands;
Who now are here taking their leaves of me,
Who am prepared against your territories,
Though not for Rome itself.

Cor. You bless me, gods!

Auf. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have

[9] To *clip* is to *embrace.* Repeatedly so. Aufidius calls Coriolanus the *anvil of his sword,* because he has in days past laid as heavy blows upon him as a smith strikes on his anvil.

[10] That is, thou first or *foremost of men.* As Mr. P. A. Daniel observes, "Aufidius addresses Coriolanus throughout in superlatives,—'All-noble Marcius!' 'Thou noble thing!' 'Thou Mars!' 'Most absolute sir.'"

[11] *Out* for *outright,* as we should say; that is, *thoroughly.*

The leading of thine own revenges, take
Th' one half of my commission; and set down —
As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st
Thy country's strength and weakness — thine own ways;
Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
To fright them, ere destroy. But come thou in:
Let me commend thee first to those that shall
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes!
And more a friend than e'er an enemy;
Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand: most welcome!

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS *and* AUFIDIUS. — *The two* Servants *come forward.*

1 Serv. Here's a strange alteration!

2 Serv. By my hand, I had thought to have strucken him with a cudgel; and yet my mind gave me his clothes made a false report of him.

1 Serv. What an arm he has! he turn'd me about with his finger and his thumb as one would set up a top.

2 Serv. Nay, I knew by his face that there was something in him: he had, sir, a kind of face, methought, — I cannot tell how to term it.

1 Serv. He had so; looking as it were, — Would I were hang'd, but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

2 Serv. So did I, I'll be sworn: he is simply the rarest man i' the world.

1 Serv. I think he is; but a greater soldier than he you wot on.

2 Serv. Who? my master?

1 Serv. Nay, it's no matter for that.

2 Serv. Worth six on him.

1 Serv. Nay, not so neither; but I take him to be the greater soldier.

2 Serv. Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that: for the defence of a town our general is excellent.

1 Serv. Ay, and for an assault too.

Re-enter the third Servant.

3 Serv. O slaves, I can tell you news,—news, you rascals!

1 and 2 Serv. What, what, what? let's partake.

3 Serv. I would not be a Roman, of all nations; I had as lief be a condemn'd man.

1 and 2 Serv. Wherefore? wherefore?

3 Serv. Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general,— Caius Marcius.

1 Serv. Why do you say *thwack our general?*

3 Serv. I do not say *thwack our general;* but he was always good enough for him.

2 Serv. Come, we are fellows and friends: he was ever too hard for him; I have heard him say so himself.

1 Serv. He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on't: before Corioli he scotch'd him and notch'd him like a carbonado.

2 Serv. An he had been cannibally given, he might have broil'd and eaten him too.

1 Serv. But, more of thy news.

3 Serv. Why, he is so made on here within as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o' the table; no question ask'd him by any of the Senators, but they stand bald before him: our general himself makes a mistress of him; sanctifies himself with's hand,[12] and turns up the white o' the eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is, our general is cut i' the middle, and but one half of what he was yesterday; for the other has half, by the entreaty and

[12] Considers the touch of his hand as holy; clasps it with the same reverence as a lover would clasp the hand of his mistress.

grant of the whole table. He'll go, he says, and sowl[13] the porter of Rome gates by th' ears: he will mow all down before him, and leave his passage poll'd.[14]

2 Serv. And he's as like to do't as any man I can imagine.

3 Serv. Do't! he will do't; for, look you, sir, he has as many friends as enemies; which friends, sir, as it were, durst not, look you, sir, show themselves, as we term it, his friends whilst he's in directitude.[15]

1 Serv. Directitude! what's that?

3 Serv. But, when they shall see, sir, his crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel all with him.

1 Serv. But when goes this forward?

3 Serv. To-morrow; to-day; presently; you shall have the drum struck up this afternoon: 'tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.

2 Serv. Why, then we shall have a stirring world again. This peace is nothing, but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

1 Serv. Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace as far as day does night; it's sprightly, waking, audible, and full of vent.[16] Peace is a very apoplexy, a lethargy; mute, deaf,

[13] To *sowl* is to pull by the ears. It is still provincially in use for pulling, dragging, or lugging. Heywood uses it in his comedy called *Love's Mistress*, 1636: "Venus will *sowle* me by the ears for this." And in a letter from Mr. Garrard to Lord Strafford: "A lieutenant *soled him well by the ears*, and drew him by the hair about the room."

[14] To *poll* is to *crop close*, to *shear;* and has all the figurative meanings of *tondo* in Latin. To *pill* and *poll* was to *plunder* and *strip*.

[15] Probably meant as a blunder for *discreditude;* the servant endeavouring to say something very grand and fine.

[16] *Full of vent* has puzzled the editors vastly; and we are at last indebted to *The Edinburgh Review*, October, 1872, for what seems a right explanation of it: "*Vent* is a technical term in hunting, to express the scenting of the game by the hounds employed in the chase." This the writer shows by the

sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.

2 Serv. 'Tis so: and as war, in some sort, may be said to be a ravisher, so it cannot be denied but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.

1 Serv. Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

3 Serv. Reason; because they then less need one another. The wars for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising, they are rising.

All Three. In, in, in, in! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—*Rome. A public Place.*

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

Sic. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him;
His remedies are tame: the present peace
And quietness of the people, which before
Were in wild hurry, here do make his friends
Blush that the world goes well; who rather had,
Though they themselves did suffer by't, behold
Dissentious numbers pestering streets, than see
Our tradesmen singing in their shops, and going
About their functions friendly.

Bru. We stood to't in good time. Is this Menenius?

Sic. 'Tis he, 'tis he: O, he is grown most kind
Of late.—

following quotations from a popular manual of hunting in Shakespeare's day: "My liege, I went this morning on my quest; My hound did sticke, and seemed to *vent* some beast." And again: "And when my hound doth straine upon good *vent*, I must confesse the same doth me content." The writer then adds: "To strain at the leash 'upon good *vent*' is, in Shakespeare's phrase, to be 'full of vent'"; or, in other words, keenly excited, full of pluck and courage, of throbbing energy and impetuous desire; in a word, full of all the kindling stir and commotion of anticipated conflict.

Enter MENENIUS.

Hail, sir!

Bru. Hail, sir!

Men. Hail to you both!

Sic. Your Coriolanus, sir, is not much miss'd
But with his friends: the commonwealth doth stand;
And so would do, were he more angry at it.

Men. All's well; and might have been much better, if
He could have temporized.[1]

Sic. Where is he, hear you?

Men. Nay, I hear nothing: his mother and his wife
Hear nothing from him.

Enter three or four Citizens.

Citizens. The gods preserve you both!

Sic. God-den,[2] our neighbours.

Bru. God-den to you all, god-den to you all.

1 Cit. Ourselves, our wives, and children on our knees,
Are bound to pray for both you.

Sic. Live, and thrive!

Bru. Farewell, kind neighbours: we wish'd Coriolanus
Had loved you as we did.

Citizens. Now the gods keep you!

Both Trib. Farewell, farewell. [*Exeunt* Citizens.

Sic. This is a happier and more comely time
Then when these fellows ran about the streets
Crying confusion.

Bru. Caius Marcius was
A worthy officer i' the war; but insolent,

[1] To *temporize* is to comply with the exigencies of the time; or to dissemble, to play Sir Prudence, and so abide one's time. See vol. vii. page 156, note 45.

[2] *God-den* or *good den*, is an old colloquialism for *good even* or *good day*. The Poet has it repeatedly. See vol. xiii. page 172, note 23.

O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,
Self-loving, —

Sic. And affecting[3] one sole throne,
Without assistance.

Men. Nay, I think not so.

Sic. We should by this, to all our lamentation,
If he had gone forth Consul, so have found it.

Bru. The gods have well prevented it, and Rome
Sits safe and still without him.

Enter an Ædile.

Æd. Worthy tribunes,
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports, the Volsces with two several powers
Are enter'd in the Roman territories,
And with the deepest malice of the war
Destroy what lies before 'em.

Men. 'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;
Which were inshell'd when Marcius stood for Rome,
And durst not once peep out.

Sic. Come, what talk you
Of Marcius?

Bru. Go see this rumourer whipp'd. — It cannot be
The Volsces dare break with us.

Men. Cannot be!
We have recórd that very well it can;
And three examples of the like have been
Within my age. But reason[4] with the fellow,
Before you punish him, where he heard this;

[3] To *affect* a thing, as the word is here used, is to *crave* it, to *have a passion for* it. See vol. xii. page 165, note 10.

[4] To *reason*, again, for to *talk* or *converse*. See page 215, note 9.

Lest you shall chance to whip your information,
And beat the messenger who bids beware
Of what is to be dreaded.

Sic. Tell not me:
I know this cannot be.

Bru. Not possible.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. The nobles in great earnestness are going
All to the Senate-house: some news is come
That turns their countenances.

Sic. 'Tis this slave; —
Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes; — his raising;
Nothing but his report.

Mess. Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded; and more,
More fearful, is deliver'd.

Sic. What more fearful?

Mess. It is spoke freely out of many mouths —
How probable I do not know — that Marcius,
Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome,
And vows revenge as spacious as between
The young'st and oldest thing.[5]

Sic. This is most likely!

Bru. Raised only, that the weaker sort may wish
Good Marcius home again.

Sic. The very trick on't.

Men. This is unlikely:
He and Aufidius can no more atone[6]
Than violentest contrarieties.

Enter a second Messenger.

[5] So comprehensive as to include all, from the youngest to the oldest.

[6] To *atone* is to *unite* or *be reconciled*, to *at-one*. Repeatedly so.

2 Mess. You are sent for to the Senate:
A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius
Associated with Aufidius, rages
Upon our territories; and have already
O'erborne their way, consumed with fire, and took
What lay before them.

Enter COMINIUS.

Com. O, you have made good work!
Men. What news? what news?
Com. You've holp to ravish your own daughters, and
To melt the city leads upon your pates;
To see your wives dishonour'd to your noses; —
Men. What's the news? what's the news?
Com. — Your temples burnèd in their cement;[7] and
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confined
Into[8] an auger's bore.
Men. Pray now, your news? —
You've made fair work, I fear me. — Pray, your news?
If Marcius should be join'd wi' th' Volscians, —
Com. If!
He is their god: he leads them like a thing
Made by some other deity than Nature,
That shapes man better; and they follow him,
Against us brats, with no less confidence
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,
Or butchers killing flies.
Men. You've made good work,
You and your apron-men; you that stood so much
Upon the voice of occupation and

[7] "*In* for *into*: the very walls penetrated and crumbled by the fire." So says Mr. Whitelaw: Heath explains it, "Burned with whatever serves to cement and hold them together."

[8] *Into* for *within*; as, just before, *in* for *into*. See vol. vii. page 28, note 71.

The breath of garlic-eaters![9]

Com. He will shake
Your Rome about your ears.

Men. As Hercules
Did shake down mellow fruit.[10] — You've made fair work!

Bru. But is this true, sir?

Com. Ay; and you'll look pale
Before you find it other. All the regions
Do smilingly revolt; and who resist
Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,
And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him?
Your enemies and his find something in him.

Men. We are all undone, unless
The noble man have mercy.

Com. Who shall ask it?
The tribunes cannot do't for shame; the people
Deserve such pity of him as the wolf
Does of the shepherds: for his best friends, if they
Should say, *Be good to Rome,* they charged him even
As those should do that had deserved his hate,
And therein show'd like enemies.[11]

Men. 'Tis true:
If he were putting to my house the brand
That should consume it, I have not the face
To say, '*Beseech you, cease.* — You've made fair hands,
You and your crafts! you've crafted fair!

Com. You've brought
A trembling upon Rome, such as was never
So incapable of help.

[9] To smell of *garlic* was a brand of vulgarity; as to smell of leeks was no less so among the Roman people.

[10] A ludicrous allusion to the apples of Hesperides.

[11] "They *charged*, and therein *show'd*," has here the force of "they *would charge*, and therein *show*."

Both Trib. Say not, we brought it.
Men. How! Was it we? we loved him; but, like beasts
And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,
Who did hoot him out o' the city.
Com. But I fear
They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,
The second name of men, obeys his points[12]
As if he were his officer: desperation
Is all the policy, strength, and defence,
That Rome can make against them.

Enter a troop of Citizens.

Men. Here come the clusters.
And is Aufidius with him?—You are they
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast
Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at
Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming;
And not a hair upon a soldier's head
Which will not prove a whip: as many coxcombs
As you threw caps up will he tumble down,
And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter;
If he could burn us all into one coal,
We have deserved it.
Citizens. Faith, we hear fearful news.
1 Cit. For mine own part,
When I said, banish him, I said, 'twas pity.
2 Cit. And so did I.
3 Cit. And so did I; and, to say the truth, so did very many of us: that we did, we did for the best; and though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet it was against our will.
Com. Ye're goodly things, you voices!

[12] *Points* probably means the same here as in *The Tempest*, i. 2: "But then exactly do all *points* of my command."

Men. You have made
Good work, you and your cry![13] — Shall's to the Capitol?

Com. O, ay, what else? [*Exeunt* COMIN. *and* MENEN.

Sic. Go, masters, get you home; be not dismay'd:
These are a side that would be glad to have
This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,
And show no sign of fear.

1 Cit. The gods be good to us! — Come, masters, let's home. I ever said we were i' the wrong when we banish'd him.

2 Cit. So did we all. But, come, let's home.
[*Exeunt* Citizens.

Bru. I do not like this news.

Sic. Nor I.

Bru. Let's to the Capitol. Would half my wealth
Would buy this for a lie!

Sic. Pray, let us go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. — *A Camp, at a small distance from Rome.*

Enter AUFIDIUS *and his* Lieutenant.

Auf. Do they still fly to th' Roman?

Lieu. I do not know what witchcraft's in him, but
Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end;
And you are darken'd in this action, sir,
Even by your own.

Auf. I cannot help it now,
Unless, by using means, I lame the foot
Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,
Even to my person, than I thought he would

13 *Cry* for *pack*, as before. See page 276, note 8.

When first I did embrace him: yet his nature
In that's no changeling; and I must excuse
What cannot be amended.

Lieu. Yet I wish, sir, —
I mean for your particular, — you had not
Join'd in commission with him; but either
Had borne the action of yourself, or else
To him had left it solely.

Auf. I understand thee well; and be thou sure,
When he shall come to his account, he knows not
What I can urge against him. Although it seems,
And so he thinks, and is no less apparent
To th' vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
And shows good husbandry for th' Volscian State,
Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon
As draw his sword; yet he hath left undone
That which shall break his neck or hazard mine,
Whene'er we come to our account.

Lieu. Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry Rome?

Auf. All places yield to him ere he sits down;
And the nobility of Rome are his;
The Senators and patricians love him too;
The tribunes are no soldiers; and their people
Will be as rash in the repeal, as hasty
T' expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome
As is the osprey to the fish,[1] who takes it
By sovereignty of nature. First he was
A noble servant to them; but he could not

[1] As fish, overcome by fear, or by a sort of fascination, surrender themselves to the osprey. So in Peele's *Battle of Alcazar*, 1594:

> I will provide thee with a princely osprey,
> That, as she flieth over fish in pools,
> The fish shall turn their glittering bellies up,
> And thou shalt take thy liberal choice of all.

Carry his honours even: whether 'twas pride,
Which out of daily fortune ever taints
The happy man;[2] whether defect of judgment,
To fail in the disposing of those chances
Which he was lord of; or whether nature,
Not to be other than one thing, not moving
From th' casque to th' cushion,[3] but commanding peace
Even with the same austerity and garb
As he controll'd the war; but one of these —
As he hath spices of them all, not all,[4]
For I dare so far free him — made him fear'd,
So hated, and so banish'd: but he has a merit,
To choke it in the utterance.[5] So our virtues
Lie in th' interpretation of the time;[6]
And power, unto itself most cómmendable,[7]

[2] "The *happy* man" is the *fortunate* or the *prosperous* man. Like the Latin *felix*. Shakespeare has it repeatedly so.

[3] Aufidius assigns three probable reasons for the miscarriage of Coriolanus; pride, which easily follows an uninterrupted train of success; unskilfulness to regulate the consequences of his own victories; a stubborn uniformity of nature, which could not make the proper transition from the *casque* to the *cushion* or *chair of civil authority;* but acted with the same despotism in peace as in war. — JOHNSON.

[4] "He has a *touch* or *taste* of all the faults in question; but has not them all *in their full force*, or not *altogether*."

[5] But his merit as a soldier is so great, that the very name of his fault must stick in the throat of his accusers.

[6] Our virtues depend, for their good name, on the particular exigencies in which we are called to act; are virtues, or the reverse, according to the construction which the time puts upon them. So, in reference to the hero, that overbearing, domineering spirit, which is praised as a virtue in military command, will be resented as a vice in civil life. As Mr. Whitelaw well expresses it, "The soldier who is all soldier is misinterpreted in time of peace; for his unfitness for peace is seen, his fitness for war is not seen."

[7] That is, the power which, having been nobly won in war, is therefore conscious of deserving well, and so commends itself unto itself, and can nowise understand why it should be odious or unfitting in time of peace. The idea running through the speech is, that the hero, carrying his military style and habits into civil life, and using his power so harshly as to provoke

Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair,
T' extol what it hath done.[8]
One fire drives out one fire;[9] one nail, one nail;
Rights by rights fouler, strengths by strengths, do fail.[10]
Come, let's away. — When, Caius, Rome is thine,
Thou'rt poor'st of all; then shortly art thou mine. [*Exeunt.*

hatred, will become as intolerable to the Volscians after he has taken Rome as he did to the Romans after he had taken Corioli.

[8] Shakespeare repeatedly uses *evident* in the sense of *certain* or *inevitable*. So in the next scene: "We must find an *evident* calamity, though we had our wish, which side should win." *A chair* refers to the *sella curulis*, the distinctive official seat of the higher Roman magistracies. "A chair, *to extol*" is a chair *that extols*; just as, a little before, "a merit, *to choke*" is a merit *that chokes*. The speaker's argument is, that Coriolanus, by his arrogance and tyranny in peace, will surely and speedily kill the popularity he has gained in war. And so the meaning here is, that power, joined to a haughty, domineering temper, and loved and gloried in for its own sake, *hath no grave so certain*, or so *imminent*, *as a chair of state bestowed in honour and extolment of its deeds*. Or, to put the matter in a concrete form, let Coriolanus, with his habits of military prerogative, and of lording it over all about him, be once advanced to a place of civil authority, and he will soon become an object of public hatred; so that the very seat which rewards and blazons his exploits will be sure to prove his ruin and the tomb of his power. See Critical Notes.

[9] That is, heat expels heat; alluding to the old notion of curing a burn by holding the burnt place up to the fire. Shakespeare has the same allusion repeatedly. So in *Julius Cæsar*, iii. 1: "As *fire drives out fire*, so pity pity." See, also, vol. xiii. page 134, note 5.

[10] The meaning of this line, expressed in full, probably is, that the better rights succumb to the worse, and the nobler strengths to the meaner; the sense of *fail* being anticipated in the first clause, and that of *fouler* continued over the second. Here, as elsewhere, Aufidius is fully conscious of the foulness of his purposes. The only thing he cares for is to get a sure twist on his antagonist. See Critical Notes.

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *Rome. A public Place.*

Enter MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS, *and others.*

Men. No, I'll not go: you hear what he hath said
Which was sometime his general; who loved him
In a most dear particular. He call'd me father:
But what o' that? Go, you that banish'd him;
A mile before his tent fall down, and knee
The way into his mercy:[1] nay, if he coy'd
To hear[2] Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.

Com. He would not seem to know me.

Men. Do you hear?

Com. Yet one time he did call me by my name:
I urged our old acquaintance, and the drops
That we have bled together. *Coriolanus*
He would not answer to; forbade all names;
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
Till he had forged himself a name o' the fire
Of burning Rome.

Men. Why, so; you've made good work!
A pair of tribunes that have wreck'd fair Rome
To make coals cheap, — a noble memory![3]

[1] To *knee* one's way is to go on one's *knees*, as to *foot* one's way is to go on one's *feet*. So, some one having remarked that Lord Malmesbury had been a long time in getting to Paris, Burke is said to have replied, "No wonder; every step he took was on his knees."

[2] *Coy'd to hear* is the same as *was coy of hearing;* that is, was distant and reserved, — was *shy and scrupulous of lending his ear.*

[3] The meaning is, "who have erected a noble *memorial* or *monument* for themselves by wrecking fair Rome in order to cheapen the price of fuel. We have had *memory* just so before. See page 288, note 3.

Com. I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon
When it was least expected: he replied,
It was a rare petition of a State
To one whom they had punish'd.

Men. Very well:
Could he say less?

Com. I offer'd to awaken his regard
For's private friends: his answer to me was,
He could not stay to pick them in a pile
Of noisome musty chaff: he said 'twas folly,
For one poor grain or two, to leave't unburnt,
And still to nose th' offence.

Men. For one poor grain or two!
I'm one of those; his mother, wife, his child,
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains:
You are the musty chaff; and you are smelt
Above the Moon: we must be burnt for you.

Sic. Nay, pray, be patient: if you refuse your aid
In this so never-needed help, yet do not
Upbraid's with our distress. But, sure, if you
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make,[4]
Might stop our countryman.

Men. No, I'll not meddle.

Sic. Pray you now, go to him.

Men. What should I do?

Bru. Only make trial what your love can do
For Rome, towards Marcius.

Men. Well, and say that Marcius
Return me, as Cominius is return'd,
Unheard; what then? or not unheard, but as
A discontented friend, grief-shot with his
Unkindness?

[4] That is, the army we can levy on the instant, or *at present.*

Sic. Say't be so, yet your good will
Must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure
As you intended well.[5]

Men. I'll undertake't:
I think he'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.
He was not taken well; he had not dined:
The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then
We pout upon the morning, are unapt
To give or to forgive; but, when we've stuff'd
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest-like fasts: therefore I'll watch him
Till he be dieted to my request,
And then I'll set upon him.

Bru. You know the very road into his kindness,
And cannot lose your way.

Men. Good faith, I'll prove him.
Speed how it will, you shall ere long have knowledge
Of my success.[6] [*Exit.*

Com. He'll never hear him.

Sic. Not?

Com. I tell you, he does sit in gold,[7] his eye
Red as 'twould burn Rome; and his injury
The jailer to his pity.[8] I kneel'd before him;
'Twas very faintly he said *Rise;* dismiss'd me
Thus, with his speechless hand: what he would do,
He sent in writing after me, what he would not;

[5] "Such gratitude as will accord with the measure of your good intentions." *After* often means *according to.*

[6] *Success*, again, in its Latin sense of *result.* See page 196, note 26.

[7] This is well explained from North's Plutarch: "He was set in his chair of state, with a marvellous and unspeakable majesty."

[8] His remembrance of the wrong done him kept his pity under lock and key.

Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions:[9]
So that all hope is vain,
Unless in's noble mother and his wife;
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
For mercy to his country. Therefore let's hence,
And with our fair entreaties haste them on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*An Outpost of the Volscian Camp before Rome. The* Sentinels *at their Stations.*

Enter to them MENENIUS.

1 Sen. Stay: whence are you?
2 Sen. Stand, and go back.
Men. You guard like men; 'tis well: but, by your leave,
I am an officer of State, and come
To speak with Coriolanus.
1 Sen. From whence?
Men. From Rome.
1 Sen. You may not pass, you must return: our general
Will no more hear from thence.
2 Sen. You'll see your Rome embraced with fire, before
You'll speak with Coriolanus.
Men. Good my friends,
If you have heard your general talk of Rome,
And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks[1]

[9] A passage hard to be understood at the best, and still more obscure as commonly pointed, thus: "What he would do, he sent in writing after me; what he would not, bound with an oath, to yield to his conditions": which is severing "what he would do" from "bound with an oath," and "what he would not" from "he sent in writing after me." As here given the sense may be rendered thus: "He sent in writing after me both what he would do and what he would not; binding the whole with an oath that we should yield to his conditions." See Critical Notes.

[1] *Lots* to *blanks* is *chances* to *nothing.*

My name hath touch'd your ears: it is Menenius.

1 Sen. Be't so; go back: the virtue of your name
Is not here passable.

Men. I tell thee, fellow,
Thy general is my lover:[2] I have been
The book of his good acts, whence men have read
His fame unparallel'd, haply amplified;
For I have ever amplified my friends —
Of whom he's chief — with all the size that verity
Would without lapsing suffer: nay, sometimes,
Like to a bowl upon a subtle[3] ground,
I've tumbled past the throw; and in his praise
Have almost stamp'd the leasing:[4] therefore, fellow,
I must have leave to pass.

1 Sen. Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you should not pass here; no, though it were as virtuous to lie as to live chastely. Therefore, go back.

Men. Pr'ythee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius, always factionary[5] on the party of your general.

1 Sen. Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you have, I am one that, telling true under him, must say you cannot pass. Therefore, go back.

Men. Has he dined, canst thou tell? for I would not speak with him till after dinner.

1 Sen. You are a Roman, are you?

Men. I am, as thy general is.

1 Sen. Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have push'd out your gates the very defender

[2] The use of *lover* for *friend* was very common.

[3] *Subtle* here means *smooth, level.* So in Ben Jonson's *Chlorida:* "Tityus's breast is counted the *subtlest* bowling-ground in all Tartary."

[4] Almost given the stamp of truth to a *lie.* See vol. v. page 154, note 9.

[5] *Factionary* seems to be used here in its primitive sense; *active.*

of them, and, in a violent popular ignorance, given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms [6] of your daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decay'd dotant as you seem to be? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in with such weak breath as this? No, you are deceived; therefore back to Rome, and prepare for your execution: you are condemn'd, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

Men. Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

2 Sen. Come, my captain knows you not.

Men. I mean, thy general.

1 Sen. My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go; lest I let forth your half-pint of blood: back; that's the utmost of your having; back.

Men. Nay, but, fellow, fellow,—

Enter CORIOLANUS *and* AUFIDIUS.

Cor. What's the matter?

Men. Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you: you shall now know that I am in estimation; you shall perceive that a Jack [7] guardant cannot office me from my son Coriolanus: guess, but by my entertainment with him, if thou stand'st not i' the state of hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering; behold now presently, and swoon for what's to come upon thee. — [*To* COR.] The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular prosperity, and love thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does! O my son, my son! thou art

[6] *Virginal palms* of course means the palms or hands of virgins held up in supplication.

[7] Equivalent to *Jack in office*, one who is proud of his petty consequence. *Companion* was used as we use *fellow*.

preparing fire for us; look thee, here's water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come to thee; but, being assured none but myself could move thee, I have been blown out of our gates with sighs; and conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here, — this, who, like a block, hath denied my access to thee.

Cor. Away!

Men. How! away!

Cor. Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs
Are servanted to others: though I owe
My revenge properly, my remission lies
In Volscian breasts.[8] That we have been familiar,
Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather
Than pity note how much.[9] Therefore, be gone.
Mine ears against your suits are stronger than
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I loved thee,
Take this along; I writ it for thy sake, [*Gives a letter.*
And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,
I will not hear thee speak. — This man, Aufidius,
Was my beloved in Rome: yet thou behold'st!

Auf. You keep a constant temper.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS *and* AUFIDIUS.

1 Sen. Now, sir, is your name Menenius?

2 Sen. 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power: you know the way home again.

1 Sen. Do you hear how we are shent[10] for keeping your greatness back?

2 Sen. What cause do you think I have to swoon?

[8] "Though my revenge is my own, or proper to myself, in the power of forgiveness the Volscians are joined." *Owe* for *own*, as usual.

[9] "Oblivious ingratitude shall *kill* our old friendship, rather than pity shall give any sign how strong it was."

[10] *Shent* is an old word for *rebuked* or *scolded at.*

Men. I neither care for the world nor your general: for such things as you, I can scarce think there's any, ye're so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself[11] fears it not from another: let your general do his worst. For you, be that you are long; and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, Away! [*Exit.*

1 Sen. A noble fellow, I warrant him.

2 Sen. The worthy fellow is our general: he's the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. — *The Tent of* CORIOLANUS.

Enter CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS, *and others.*

Cor. We will before the walls of Rome to-morrow
Set down our host. — My partner in this action,
You must report to th' Volscian lords, how plainly[1]
I have borne this business.

Auf. Only their ends
You have respected; stopp'd your ears against
The general suit of Rome; never admitted
A private whisper, no, not with such friends
That thought them sure of you.

Cor. This last old man,
Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome,
Loved me above the measure of a father;
Nay, godded me, indeed. Their latest refuge
Was to send him; for whose old love I have,
Though I show'd sourly to him, once more offer'd
The first conditions, which they did refuse,
And cannot now accept; to grace him only
That thought he could do more, a very little

[11] That is, by his own hands.

[1] *Plainly* is *openly;* remotely from artifice or concealment.

I've yielded to: fresh embassies and suits,
Nor from the State nor private friends, hereafter
Will I lend ear to.— [*Shout within.*
Ha! what shout is this?
Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow
In the same time 'tis made? I will not.—

Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, *leading young* MARCIUS, VALERIA, *and* Attendants.

My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould
Wherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand
The grandchild to her blood.—But out, affection!
All bond and privilege of nature, break!
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.—
What is that curtsy worth? or those doves' eyes,
Which can make gods forsworn? I melt, and am not
Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows;
As if Olympus to a molehill should
In supplication nod; and my young boy
Hath an aspéct of intercession, which
Great Nature cries *Deny not.* Let the Volsces
Plough Rome, and harrow Italy: I'll never
Be such a gosling to obey instinct; but stand,
As if a man were author of himself,
And knew no other kin.
Vir. My lord and husband!
Cor. These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome.
Vir. The sorrow that delivers us thus changed
Makes you think so.
Cor. Like a dull actor now,
I have forgot my part, and I am out,
Even to a full disgrace.—Best of my flesh,
Forgive my tyranny; but do not say,
For that, *Forgive our Romans.* O, a kiss

Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge !
Now, by the jealous Queen of Heaven,[2] that kiss
I carried from thee, dear ; and my true lip
Hath virgin'd it e'er since. — You gods ! I prate,
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted : sink, my knee, i' the earth ; [*Kneels.*
Of thy deep duty more impression show
Than that of common sons.

Vol. [*Raising him.*] O, stand up bless'd !
Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,
I kneel before thee ; and unproperly
Show duty, as mistaken all this while
Between the child and parent. [*Kneels.*

Cor. [*Hastily raising her.*] What is this ?
Your knees to me ? to your corrected son ?
Then let the pebbles on the angry beach
Fillip the stars ;[3] then let the mutinous winds
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery Sun ;
Murdering impossibility,[4] to make
What cannot be, slight work.

Vol. Thou art my warrior ;
I holp to frame thee. Do you know this lady ?

Cor. The noble sister of Publicola,
The moon of Rome ; chaste as the icicle
That's curded by the frost from purest snow,
And hangs on Dian's temple. Dear Valeria !

[2] Juno was the special guardian of marriage, and consequently the avenger of connubial perfidy.

[3] To *fillip* is to *thump* or *smite.* So that the image is of the enraged beach tossing or spitting the pebbles so high as to hit the stars ; — hyperbolical enough ! See vol. xi. page 171, note 31. — We have a similar expression in *The Tempest*, i. 2 : "The sea, mounting to th' welkin's cheek, dashes the fire out."

[4] Putting impossibility out of existence ; causing that there be no such thing.

Vol. This is a poor epitome of yours,
Which by th' interpretation [5] of full time
May show like all yourself.
Cor. The god of soldiers,
With the consent of súpreme Jove,[6] inform
Thy thoughts with nobleness; that thou mayst prove
To shame unvulnerable, and stick i' the wars
Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,[7]
And saving those that eye thee!
Vol. Your knee, sirrah.
Cor. That's my brave boy!
Vol. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,
Are suitors to you.
Cor. I beseech you, peace:
Or, if you'd ask, remember this before,
The things I have forsworn to grant [8] may never
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
Again with Rome's mechanics: tell me not
Wherein I seem unnatural; desire not
T' allay my rages and revenges with
Your colder reasons.
Vol. O, no more, no more!
You've said you will not grant us any thing;
For we have nothing else to ask, but that

[5] *Interpretation* is here equivalent to *development;* "which time will unfold into a complete, full-blown image of yourself."

[6] This is inserted with great decorum. Jupiter was the tutelary god of Rome, and the Capitol was his temple.

[7] A *flaw* is a violent blast or sudden gust of wind. Carew thus describes it, in his *Survey of Cornwall:* "One kind of these storms they call a *flaw*, or *flaugh*, which is a mighty gale of wind passing suddenly to the shore, and working strong effects upon whatsoever it encounters in its way."

[8] "Forsworn to grant" is sworn *not* to grant, and so forsworn, or perjured, *in* or *by granting*. Still another instance of the infinitive used gerundively.

Which you deny already: yet we'll ask;
That, if we fail in our request, the blame
May hang upon your hardness: therefore hear us.
Cor. Aufidius, and you Volsces, mark; for we'll
Hear nought from Rome in private.—Your request?
Vol. Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
And state of bodies would bewray what life
We've led since thy exile. Think with thyself
How more unfortunate than all living women
Are we come hither; since that thy sight, which should
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow;
Making the mother, wife, and child, to see
The son, the husband, and the father, tearing
His country's bowels out. And to poor we
Thine enmity's most capital: thou barr'st us
Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort
That all but we enjoy; for how can we,
Alas, how can we for our country pray,
Whereto we're bound, together with thy victory,
Whereto we're bound? alack, or we must lose
The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,
Our comfort in the country. We must find
An evident calamity, though we had
Our wish, which side should win; for either thou
Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
With manacles thorough our streets, or else
Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,
And bear the palm for having bravely shed
Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,
I purpose not to wait on fortune till
These wars determine: if I cannot persuade thee
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts
Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner

March to assault thy country than to tread —
Trust to't, thou shalt not — on thy mother's womb,
That brought thee to this world.

Vir. Ay, and on mine,
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name
Living to time.

Young Mar. 'A shall not tread on me:
I'll run away till I am bigger, then I'll fight.

Cor. Not of a woman's tenderness to be,
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see.
I've sat too long. [*Rising.*

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
If it were so that our request did tend
To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
The Volsces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
As poisonous of your honour: no; our suit
Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volsces
May say, *This mercy we have show'd;* the Romans,
This we received; and each in either side
Give the all-hail to thee, and cry, *Be bless'd*
For making up this peace! Thou know'st, great son,
The end of war's uncertain; but this certain,
That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit
Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name,
Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses;
Whose chronicle thus writ: *The man was noble,*
But with his last attempt he wiped it out;
Destroy'd his country; and his name remains
To the ensuing age abhorr'd. Speak to me, son:
Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,
To imitate the graces of the gods;
To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' the air,
And yet to charge thy sulphur[9] with a bolt

[9] *Sulphur* is here put for *lightning;* the then unknown force that pro-

That should but rive an oak.[10] Why dost not speak?
Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man
Still to remember wrongs? — Daughter, speak you:
He cares not for your weeping. — Speak thou, boy;
Perhaps thy childishness will move him more
Than can our reasons. — There's no man in the world
More bound to's mother; yet here he lets me prate
Like one i' the stocks. — Thou'st never in thy life
Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy;
When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,
Has cluck'd thee to the wars, and safely home,
Loaden with honour. Say my request's unjust,
And spurn me back: but, if it be not so,
Thou art not honest; and the gods will plague thee,
That thou restrain'st from me the duty which
To a mother's part belongs. — He turns away:
Down, ladies; let us shame him with our knees.
To his surname *Coriolanus* 'longs more pride
Than pity to our prayers. Down; an end;
This is the last: so we will home to Rome,
And die among our neighbours. — Nay, behold's:
This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,

pelled the thunderbolt. The idea is of Omnipotence, able to rend the universe in pieces, yet satisfied to charge its thunder-engines with a bolt that only splits an oak.

10 A very high and noble image or expression of character; but perhaps the grandeur of the image somewhat obscures the sense. The "fine strains of honour" intended are such as have their life in strength married to gentleness, or in a contempt of danger and death united with a tender and pitiful heart. The idea was evidently a favourite one with Shakespeare; and many of his noblest strains of pathos turn upon a style of manhood which fears not power, but whose soul-storm falters into music at the touch of compassion. The author of *Ecce Homo* aptly quotes this passage as illustrating how "the noblest and most amiable thing is power mixed with gentleness, the reposing, self-restraining attitude of strength." Such graces are indeed Divine. See vol. xvi. page 299, note 13.

But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,
Does reason our petition with more strength
Than thou hast to deny't. — Come, let us go:
This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;
His wife is in Corioli, and this child
Like him by chance.[11] — Yet give us our dispatch:
I'm hush'd until our city be a-fire,
And then I'll speak a little.

Cor. [*After holding her by the hand in silence.*] O mother, mother!
What have you done? Behold, the heavens do ope,
The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O!
You've won a happy victory to Rome;
But for your son, — believe it, O, believe it, —
Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
If not most mortal to him. But, let it come. —
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
Were you in my stead, say, would you have heard
A mother less? or granted less, Aufidius?

Auf. I was moved withal.

Cor. I dare be sworn you were:
And, sir, it is no little thing to make
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,
What peace you'll make, advise me: for my part,
I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you; and pray you,
Stand to me in this cause. — O mother! wife!

Auf. [*Aside.*] I'm glad thou'st set thy mercy and thy honour
At difference in thee: out of that I'll work
Myself a firmer fortune. [*The* Ladies *make signs to* CORIO.

[11] This child is not indeed his son, but only *happens* to resemble him.

Cor. [*To the* Ladies.] Ay, by-and-by:
We will but drink together;[12] and you shall bear
A better witness back than words, which we,
On like conditions, will have counter-seal'd.
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve
To have a temple built you: all the swords
In Italy, and her confederate arms,
Could not have made this peace. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Rome. A public Place.*

Enter MENENIUS *with* SICINIUS.

Men. See you yond coign o' the Capitol, yond corner-stone?

Sic. Why, what of that?

Men. If it be possible for you to displace it with your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him. But I say there is no hope in't: our throats are sentenced, and stay upon[1] execution.

Sic. Is't possible that so short a time can alter the condition[2] of a man?

Men. There is differency between a grub and a butterfly; yet your butterfly was a grub. This Marcius is grown from man to dragon: he has wings; he's more than a creeping thing.

Sic. He loved his mother dearly.

Men. So did he me; and he no more remembers his mother now than an eight-year-old horse. The tartness of his face sours ripe grapes: when he walks, he moves like an engine, and the ground shrinks before his treading: he is

[12] Meaning, apparently, that Aufidius, or the Volscian leaders, and himself will but delay long enough for an amicable pledge.

[1] To *stay upon* means the same as to *wait for*.

[2] *Condition*, here, as usual, is *temper* or *disposition*.

able to pierce a corslet with his eye; talks like a knell, and his hum is a battery. He sits in his state, as a thing made for Alexander.[3] What he bids be done, is finish'd with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity, and a heaven to throne in.

Sic. Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

Men. I paint him in the character. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him: there is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger; that shall our poor city find; and all this is 'long of you.[4]

Sic. The gods be good unto us!

Men. No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banish'd him, we respected not them; and, he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house:
The plébeians have got your fellow-tribune,
And hale him up and down; all swearing, if
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,
They'll give him death by inches.

Enter a second Messenger.

Sic. What's the news?

2 Mess. Good news, good news! the ladies have prevail'd,
The Volscians are dislodged, and Marcius gone:
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,
No, not th' expulsion of the Tarquins.

Sic. Friend,
Art certain this is true?

2 Mess. Ay, sir, most certain, —

[3] That is, like an image made in the likeness of Alexander.

[4] "*Along* of you" is *because* of you. So the phrase occurs repeatedly.

As certain as I know the Sun is fire:
Where have you lurk'd, that you make doubt of it?
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide
As the recomforted through th' gates. Why, hark you!
[*Trumpets and hautboys sounded, and drums beaten, all together; shouting also, within.*
The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes,
Tabors, and cymbals, and the shouting Romans,
Make the Sun dance. Hark you! [*Shouting again within.*
Men. This is good news:
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia
Is worth of Consuls, Senators, patricians,
A city full; of tribunes, such as you,
A sea and land full. You've pray'd well to-day:
This morning for ten thousand of your throats
I'd not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy!
[*Shouting and music still, within.*
Sic. First, the gods bless you for your tidings; next,
Accept my thankfulness.
2 Mess. Sir, we have all
Great cause to give great thanks.
Sic. They're near the city?
2 Mess. Almost at point to enter.
Sic. We will meet them,
And help the joy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. — *The Same. A Street near the Gate.*

Enter in procession, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, VALERIA, *&c., accompanied by* Senators, Patricians, *and* Citizens.

1 Sen. Behold our patroness, the life of Rome!
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
And make triumphant fires; strew flowers before them:

Unshout the noise that banish'd Marcius,
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother;
Cry, *Welcome, ladies, welcome!*

All. Welcome, ladies,
Welcome! [*A flourish with drums and trumpets. Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.— *Corioli. A public Place.*

Enter AUFIDIUS, *with* Attendants.

Auf. Go tell the lords o' the city I am here;
Deliver them this paper: having read it,
Bid them repair to th' market-place; where I,
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse
The city ports by this hath enter'd, and
Intends t' appear before the people, hoping
To purge himself with words: dispatch.—
[*Exeunt* Attendants.

Enter three or four Conspirators *of* AUFIDIUS'S *faction.*

Most welcome!

1 Con. How is it with our general?

Auf. Even so
As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,
And with his charity slain.

2 Con. Most noble sir,
If you do hold the same intent wherein
You wish'd us parties, we'll deliver you
Of your great danger.

Auf. Sir, I cannot tell:
We must proceed as we do find the people.

3 Con. The people will remain uncertain whilst
'Twixt you there's difference; but the fall of either
Makes the survivor heir of all.

Auf. I know it;
And my pretext to strike at him admits
A good construction. I raised him, and I pawn'd
Mine honour for his truth: who being so heighten'd,
He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,
Seducing so my friends; and, to this end,
He bow'd his nature, never known before
But to be rough, unswayable, and fierce.
3 Con. Sir, his stoutness
When he did stand for Consul, which he lost
By lack of stooping, —
Auf. That I would have spoke of.
Being banish'd for't, he came unto my hearth;
Presented to my knife his throat: I took him;
Made him joint-servant with me; gave him way
In all his own desires; nay, let him choose
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,
My best and freshest men; served his designments
In mine own person; holp to reap the fame
Which he did end all his;[1] and took some pride
To do myself this wrong: till, at the last,
I seem'd his follower, not partner; and
He waged me with his countenance,[2] as if

[1] It appears that *end* was and still is a technical term for the finishing of harvest-work. The Rev. Mr. Arrowsmith has produced, from recent advertisements in Gloucestershire, the phrases "well-*ended* wheat ricks" and "a rick of well-*ended* hay"; meaning, apparently, stacks of wheat well stored &c. So that the meaning of the text is, that Coriolanus had managed to appropriate for his own exclusive use the whole harvest of renown which Aufidius had helped to gather and prepare.

[2] The sense of to *wage*, as here used, still lives in *wages*. So in Heywood's *Wise Woman of Hogsdon*: "I receive thee gladly to my house, and *wage* thy stay." The meaning in the text is, "He treated me as his dependent or hireling, and paid me with bland looks and patronizing airs, as a kind of wages." Or *countenance*, here, as in at least two other places, may mean *entertainment* or *reception*. See vol. v. page 8, note 4.

I had been mercenary.
1 Con. So he did, my lord;
The army marvell'd at it; and, in the last,
When he had carried Rome, and that we look'd
For no less spoil than glory, —
Auf. There was it;
For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him.
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour
Of our great action: therefore shall he die,
And I'll renew me in his fall. But, hark!
[*Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the people.*
1 Con. Your native town you enter'd like a post,
And had no welcomes home; but he returns,
Splitting the air with noise.
2 Con. And patient fools,
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear
With giving him glory.
3 Con. Therefore, at your vantage,
Ere he express himself, or move the people
With what he woúld say, let him feel your sword,
Which we will second. When he lies along,
After your way his tale pronounced shall bury
His reasons with his body.
Auf. Say no more:
Here come the lords.

Enter the Lords *of the City.*

Lords. You are most welcome home.
Auf. I've not deserved it.
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perused
What I have written to you?
Lords. We have.
1 Lord. And grieve to hear't.

What faults he made before the last, I think
Might have found easy fines; but, there to end
Where he was to begin, and give away
The benefit of our levies, answering us
With our own charge,[3] making a treaty where
There was a yielding, — this admits no excuse.
Auf. He approaches: you shall hear him.

Enter CORIOLANUS, *with drum and colours; a crowd of* Citizens *with him.*

Cor. Hail, lords! I am return'd your soldier;
No more infected with my country's love
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting
Under your great command. You are to know,
That prosperously I have attempted, and,
With bloody passage, led your wars even to
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home
Do more than counterpoise a full third part
The charges of the action. We've made peace,
With no less honour to the Antiates
Than shame to th' Romans; and we here deliver,
Subscribed by th' Consuls and patricians,
Together with the seal o' the Senate, what
We have compounded on.
Auf. Read it not, noble lords;
But tell the traitor, in the high'st degree
He hath abused your powers.
Cor. Traitor! how now!
Auf. Ay, traitor, Marcius!
Cor. Marcius!
Auf. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius: dost thou think
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
Coriolanus, in Corioli? —

[3] "Instead of spoils and victory, presenting the bill, — for ourselves to pay."

You lords and heads o' the State, perfidiously
He has betray'd your business, and given up,
For certain drops of salt, your city Rome —
I say, your city — to his wife and mother;
Breaking his oath and resolution, like
A twist of rotten silk; never admitting
Counsel o' the war; but at his nurse's tears
He whined and roar'd away your victory;
That pages blush'd at him, and men of heart
Look'd wondering each at other.

Cor. Hear'st thou, Mars?

Auf. Name not the god, thou boy of tears!

Cor. Ha!

Auf. No more.[4]

Cor. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
Too great for what contains it. *Boy!* O slave! —
Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever
I was forced to scold. Your judgments, my grave lords,
Must give this cur the lie: and his own notion[5] —
Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him; that
Must bear my beating to his grave — shall join
To thrust the lie unto him.

1 Lord. Peace, both, and hear me speak.

Cor. Cut me to pieces, Volsces! men and lads,
Stain all your edges on me! — *Boy!* false hound!
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I
Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli;
Alone I did it. *Boy!*

Auf. Why, noble lords,
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,

[4] No more than a boy of tears.

[5] *Notion*, as the context shows, is here equivalent to *judgment*. Repeatedly so. See vol. xvii. page 61, note 16.

Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,
'Fore your own eyes and ears?

All the Conspirators. Let him die for't!

Citizens. Tear him to pieces! — Do it presently! — He kill'd my son! — My daughter! — He kill'd my cousin Marcus! — He kill'd my father! —

2 Lord. Peace, ho! — no outrage; — peace!
The man is noble, and his fame folds-in
This orb o' the Earth.[6] His last offences to us
Shall have judicious [7] hearing. — Stand, Aufidius,
And trouble not the peace.

Cor. O, that I had him,
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,
To use my lawful sword!

Auf. Insolent villain!

All the Conspirators. Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!

[AUFIDIUS *and the* Conspirators *draw, and kill* CORIOLANUS, *who falls:* AUFIDIUS *stands on him.*

Lords. Hold, hold, hold, hold!

Auf. My noble masters, hear me speak.

1 Lord. O Tullus, —

2 Lord. Thou'st done a deed whereat valour will weep.

3 Lord. Tread not upon him. — Masters all, be quiet;
Put up your swords.

Auf. My lords, when you shall know — as in this rage,
Provoked by him, you cannot — the great danger
Which this man's life did owe [8] you, you'll rejoice

[6] His fame overspreads the world.

[7] *Judicious* here has the sense of *judicial;* the two being formerly convertible terms.

[8] To speak of *owing* you danger sounds odd, nor do I remember another instance of the word used in exactly the same way. The meaning clearly is, to *have*, to *threaten*, or be *fraught with* danger to you. Perhaps the phrase, still common, "He owes me a grudge," that is, he has a grudge against me, is of similar origin.

That he is thus cut off. Please it your Honours
To call me to your Senate, I'll deliver
Myself your loyal servant, or endure
Your heaviest censure.

1 Lord. Bear from hence his body,
And mourn you for him; let him be regarded
As the most noble corse that ever herald
Did follow to his urn.

2 Lord. His own impatience
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.
Let's make the best of it.

Auf. My rage is gone;
And I am struck with sorrow.—Take him up;—
Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers; I'll be one.—
Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully:
Trail your steel pikes.—Though in this city he
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory.[9]—
Assist.

[*Exeunt, bearing the body of* CORIOLANUS.
A dead march sounded.

[9] *Memory*, again, for *memorial* or *monument*. See page 305, note 3.

CRITICAL NOTES.

ACT I., SCENE I.

Page 186. 1 Cit. *Against him first.* — In the original, this speech has the prefix "*All*," just as have the preceding speeches to which "*Citizens*" is prefixed in the text. Malone thought it should be assigned to *1 Citizen*, and surely he was right.

P. 186. 2 Cit. *Nay, but speak not maliciously.* — The original prefixes "*All*" to this speech. Evidently wrong, as the second Citizen endeavours, all through this scene, to assuage the wrath of his fellows.

P. 187. *He did it to please his mother, and* partly to be *proud.* — So Hanmer. The old text reads "and *to be partly* proud." Capell prints *partly* before "to please his mother." Staunton thinks it should be *portly;* Lettsom, *pertly*, meaning *openly*, *clearly*.

P. 187. 1 Cit. *Our business is not unknown to the Senate;* &c. — In the original, this speech is given to the second *Citizen*, as are also the subsequent speeches of this scene which are here assigned to the first *Citizen*. This is clearly wrong, as it is quite at odds with the course of the preceding dialogue. The second *Citizen* is a temperate defender of the hero. Capell made the correction.

P. 188. *Care for us! True, indeed, they ne'er cared for us yet.* — So the old copies. Several modern editions print "True, indeed! They ne'er cared for us yet."

P. 188. *But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture*
To stale't *a little more.* — The original has *scale* instead of *stale*. The forced attempts made to justify *scale* are, I think, a full condemnation of it. Corrected by Theobald.

P. 189. *And, mutually* participant, *did minister*, &c. — The original has "And mutually *participate*."

P. 191. *He that will give good words to* ye *will flatter Beneath abhorring.*—The original has *thee* instead of *ye*. The old abbreviations of the two words were often confounded. Here the context imperatively requires *ye*. Corrected by Dyce.

P. 192. *And hew down oaks with rushes.* Trust *ye?* Hang *ye!*—The original reads "*Hang* ye: *trust ye?*" The transposition was proposed by Coleridge, and is approved by Walker.

P. 192. *With every minute you do change* your *mind.*—So Collier's second folio. The old text has "change *a* mind."

P. 193. *Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms, Of their own choice: one's Junius Brutus,* one *Sicinius Velutus,* &c.—So Walker. The old text lacks *one* after *Brutus*. The insertion is, I think, fairly called for by both sense and metre.

P. 193. *The rabble should have first* unroof'd *the city.*—The original has *unroo'st*. Theobald's correction.

P. 195. *The present* war *devour him!*—The old text has *Warres.*

Act I., Scene 2.

P. 198. *Let us alone to guard* Corioli.—Here, and throughout the play, the original has *Corioles*, or *Carioles*.

P. 198. *If they set down before's, for* their *remove Bring up your army.*—The original has *the* instead of *their*, which was proposed by Johnson.

Act I., Scene 3.

P. 200. I *see him pluck Aufidius down by th' hair.* The original omits *I*. Supplied by Rowe.

P. 200. *Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood At Grecian* swords, contemning.—*Tell Valeria,* &c.—The original reads "At Grecian *sword. Contenning,* tell *Valeria*"; the second folio, "At Grecian *swordes Contending:* tell," &c. Collier's second folio has *contemning*. Lettsom proposed "*As* Grecian swords contemning."

P. 201. *Catch'd it again:* and, *whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth,* &c. — So Hanmer. The original has *or* instead of *and.*

ACT I., SCENE 4.

P. 203. *No, nor a man that fears you* more *than he;*
That's lesser than a little. — Instead of *more,* the original has *less,* which directly contradicts the sense of the passage. Both Johnson and Capell proposed *more.*

P. 204. *You shames of Rome! you herd of — Boils and plagues*
Plaster you o'er; &c. — The original reads "you Heard of Byles and Plagues." The correction is Johnson's, and the reading aptly marks the speaker's explosive rage. Collier's second folio has "*unheard* of Byles," &c.; which Dyce seems to think very well of, though he does not adopt it. I am by no means sure that it ought not to be preferred.

P. 204. *If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives,*
As they us to our trenches. Follow me. — Instead of *Follow me,* the original has, simply, *followes.* The reading in the text is Lettsom's; a very valuable correction.

P. 205. *Who,* sensible, *outdares his senseless sword,*
And, when it bows, stands *up.* — *Thou art* lost, *Marcius.* — In the first of these lines, the original reads "Who *sensibly* out-dares." In the second, it has *stand'st* instead of *stands,* and *left* instead of *lost.* The latter correction is Collier's. Thirlby changed *sensibly* to *sensible.*

P. 205. *Thou wast a soldier*
Even to Cato's *wish.* — The original has "to *Calves* wish." Corrected by Theobald. See foot-note 7.

ACT I., SCENE 5.

P. 206. *See here these movers that do prize their* hours
At a crack'd drachma. — Pope and Johnson changed *hours* to *honours.* The former is ascertained to be the right reading, by referring to the authority which the Poet followed: "The city being taken

in this sort, the most part of the souldiers began incontinently to spoile, to cary away, and to looke up the bootie they had wonne. But Martius was marvellous angry with them, and cryed out on them, that it was no time now to looke after spoile, and runne stragling here and there to enrich themselves." — I must add that the original has *Drachme.* Collier, White, and Dyce print *drachm;* Staunton *dram;* I cannot tell why. Metre requires a dissyllable.

P. 207. *Now the fair goddess, Fortune,*
Fall deep in love with thee; and her great charms
Misguide th' *opposers' swords.* — So Walker. The old text has "Misguide *thy* Opposers swords."

ACT I., SCENE 6.

P. 207. Ye *Roman gods,*
Lead their successes as we wish our own, &c. — The original has *The* instead of *Ye.* Hanmer's correction.

P. 208. *More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue*
From every meaner man's. — The original has *man* instead of *man's.* Corrected by Hanmer.

P. 209. *Will the time serve to tell? I do not think* so.
Where is the enemy? — So Lettsom. The original lacks *so.* Collier's second folio reads "think *it.*"

P. 211. Go we along; *make you a sword of me.*
If these shows be not outward, &c. — The original reads, "*Oh me alone,* make you a sword of me," &c. This is commonly printed "O me, alone! make you a sword of me?" &c. Dyce, however, prints "O, me alone!" &c. No one seems able to make any sense out of the old text, however punctuated. Heath says, "This is undoubtedly nonsense. I conceive we should read '*Let* me alone; make you a sword of me'?" But I cannot make this reading cohere with the context. Singer prints "*Come! along!* make you a sword of me." The reading in the text is suggested by Mr. R. Whitelaw, in the "Rugby edition" of the play. It gives about the same meaning as Singer's, and is, I think, more in the Poet's manner. That meaning is, of course, "Let us proceed to the work; use me as your sword";

and, as they already have the speaker in their arms, the language is not strained. We have repeated instances of *me* and *we* confounded, and also of *along* misprinted *alone*.

P. 211. *A certain number,*
Though thanks to all, must I select: the rest
Shall bear the business in some other fight. — The original reads "must I select *from all*: The rest," &c. The words *from all* are redundant in metre, and, I think, much worse than redundant in sense. Probably interpolated for the sake of the jingle. Hanmer omits them.

P. 211. *Please you to march;*
And I *shall quickly draw out my command*, &c. — The old text reads "And *foure* shall quickly draw." I cannot imagine — it seems that nobody can — what business *four* has there. Singer substitutes *some*, which is better than *four* indeed, but far from satisfactory. Lettsom proposes *we*, meaning the speaker and Cominius; and he observes that "*four* may have been derived from the sixth line above." This is certainly better than *some;* still I prefer *I*, which was proposed by Capell.

ACT I., SCENE 8.

P. 212. *Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor*
More than thy fame I *envy.* — The original reads "More than thy fame *and* envy." The construction commonly put upon the passage is, "Not Afric owns a serpent that I more abhor and envy than I do thy fame"; *envy* being interpreted in the old sense of *hate*. But why should Aufidius profess to abhor and hate the *fame* of Marcius? when the plain truth is, that he *desires* or *covets* his fame, and therefore *envies* him the possession of it. The theory of the change is, that the pronoun *I* was mistaken by the printer for the usual contraction of *and*. The correction is from Collier's second folio.

ACT I., SCENE 9.

P. 215. *May these same instruments, which you profane,*
Never sound more! Shall *drums and trumpets*, when
I' the field, prove flatterers? Let Courts and cities be
Made all of false-faced soothing, where *steel grows*
Soft as the parasite's silk: let them *be made*

An overture for th' wars.—This is one of the most troublesome passages in the very troublesome text of this play. In the second and third lines, the original reads "*When* drums and trumpets *shall* i' the field prove flatterers, let courts," &c. The transposition of *when* and *shall*, so as to make the clause interrogative, was proposed by Singer. I think it removes the worst of the difficulty. In the fourth line, the original has *when* instead of *where;* an easy and common misprint. In the fifth line also, the original reads "let *him* be made," &c.; where *him* can hardly be reconciled with any possible explanation of the passage. Every one experienced in proof-reading knows how apt *him* and *them* or *'em* are to be misprinted for each other; and in fact the originals of Shakespeare have divers instances of such misprinting. As the text is here printed *them* refers to "drums and trumpets." Dyce, following Collier's second folio, changes *An overture* to *A coverture*, understanding it to mean *covering*, that is, *armour*. But I question whether *coverture* was ever used in that sense. Shakespeare has the word in two places, and in both it bears a sense very different from that; as "couchèd in the woodbine *coverture*," and "in night's *coverture* we may surprise and take him." *Overture* is *introduction* or *prelude*. I add an exact transcript of the old text:

May these same Instruments, which you prophane,
Never sound more: *when* Drums and Trumpets *shall*
I' th' field prove flatterers, let Courts and Cities be
Made all of false-fac'd soothing:
When Steele growes soft, as the Parasites Silke,
Let *him* be made an Overture for th' Warres.

P. 215. CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS.—*Bear*
Th' addition nobly ever!—Both here and in the next speech, the original has "*Marcius Caius* Coriolanus."

ACT I., SCENE 10.

P. 218. *My* valour, *poison'd*
With only suffering stain by him, for him,
Shall fly out of itself.—The original reads "my *valors* poison'd," &c. The misprinting of plurals and singulars for each other is one of the commonest. The correction is Pope's.

P. 218. *The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,*
Embankments *all of fury*, &c.—The original has *Embarquements*. Hanmer changed this to *Embankments*, which Walker says "is the true reading."

ACT II., SCENE I.

P. 220. *Said to be something imperfect in favouring the* thirst *complaint.* — The original reads "*first* complaint"; in which there appears neither humour nor sense. *Thirst* is derived from Collier's second folio. There can be little hesitation in receiving it, as it makes both the sense and the humour perfect. Lettsom thinks it should be *first complainer*, and that the clause should come in after "forehead of the morning."

P. 221. *I* cannot *say your Worships have deliver'd the matter well*, &c. — The original reads "I *can* say"; a palpable error.

P. 221. *Yet they lie deadly that tell you* you *have good faces.* — The original lacks the second *you*; another palpable error.

P. 221. *What harm can your* bisson *conspetuities glean out of this character*, &c. — The original has *beesome*, doubtless a misprint for *bisson*, which is an old word for *blind*, and which was formerly spelt in various ways. In a later scene we have, apparently, the same word misprinted *bosome*. See foot-note 8.

P. 223. *The most sovereign prescription in Galen is but* empiricutic, &c. — The original has *Emperickqutique*, for which Collier's second folio substitutes *empiric physic*. See foot-note 13.

P. 225. *Where he hath won,*
With fame, a name to Caius Marcius; these
In honour follows Coriolanus. — Welcome,
Welcome to Rome, renown'd Coriolanus! — Here, again, the original transposes the names, *Martius Caius*, and also repeats them before *Coriolanus* in the next line. The first *welcome* is wanting in the old text. The insertion is Walker's.

P. 226. *From whom I have received not only greetings,*
But with them charge *of honours.* — So Theobald and Collier's second folio. The original has *change* instead of *charge*.

P. 228. *He cannot temperately transport his honours*
From where he should begin to th' *end;* &c. — The original has "begin *and* end." I have tried in vain to make any sense out of

this reading; and the strained yet futile attempts which have been made at explaining it are to me strong argument of its being wrong; for by the same methods almost any words may be made to yield almost any sense. Another reading has occurred to me, "'*Tween* where he should begin and end." This would give the same sense, or nearly the same, as the reading in the text. And as the capitals *F* and *T* are commonly written, either might easily be mistaken for the other; under which mistake the rest of the word would naturally be assimilated accordingly. — Since writing the above, I find that "begin *to th'* end" was proposed by Seymour. See note on "And for the gap," &c., page 163.

P. 228. *That he will give them, make as little question*
As he is proud to do't. — So Reed, 1803. The original has "make *I* as little question"; which is against both sense and metre; *make* being clearly in the same construction as *doubt not*, fourth line above. Lettsom approves the omission.

P. 229. *Of no more soul nor fitness for the world*
Than camels in the *war.* — So Hanmer. The original has "in *their* war."

P. 229. *This, as you say, suggested*
At some time when his soaring insolence
Shall touch *the people, will be* as *fire*
To kindle their dry stubble. — The original has *teach* instead of *touch*, and "be *his* fire." The former correction is Hanmer's, the latter Capell's. Pope reads "be *the* fire."

Act II., Scene 2.

P. 230. *If he did not care whether he had their love or no,* he'd *waved indifferently 'twixt,* &c. — The original has "*he* waved." The slight change here made is Lettsom's. Of course the meaning is, "he *would have* waved."

P. 231. *Bonneted* into their estimation and report, *without any further deed to have them at all.* — The old text reads "bonneted, without any further deed, to have them at all *into their estimation, and report.*" Pope altered *have* to *heave*, which has been

generaly adopted, though it necessitates a forced and very questionable explanation of *bonneted.* The right construction is, I think, clearly that given in the text; but it is, to say the least, not easy to get the sense of that construction from the old order of the words. Nor is the transposition which I have made a whit more free or bold than a great many others that are commonly thought needful, as indeed most of them are. See foot-note 2.

P. 232. *By Caius Marcius Coriolanus; whom*
We meet *here, both to thank,* &c. — Here, again, the original transposes the names, *Martius Caius,* and also has *met* instead of *meet.*

P. 233. *He had rather venture all his limbs for honour*
Than one on's *ears to hear't.* — The original has "Then *on ones* Eares."

P. 234. *When with his Amazonian* chin *he drove,* &c. — The original has *Shinne* instead of *chin.*

P. 235. *As* waves *before*
A vessel under sail, so men obey'd,
And fell below his stem. — So the second folio; the first has *weeds* instead of *waves.* Singer aptly remarks, that "a vessel *stemming the waves* is an image much more suitable to the prowess of Coriolanus than the displacing of weeds." Lettsom also prefers *waves;* and observes, that "the sense requires a circumstance that happens usually, *not exceptionally,* to ships under sail."

ACT II., SCENE 3.

P. 240. *You know the cause,* sirs, *of my standing here.* — The original has *Sir* instead of *sirs.* As the speaker is addressing the "brace" of citizens who have just entered, *sirs* is clearly right. Probably misprinted from having *sir* directly under it in the next line. Corrected by Rowe.

P. 240. *Ay,* not *mine own desire.* — So the third folio. The earlier editions have *but* and *no* instead of *not.*

P. 242. *Why in this* woolvish toge *should I stand here*, &c.—The original has *Woolvish tongue;* the second folio, *gowne* instead of *tongue*, which is doubtless a misprint for *toge*. For *woolvish* Collier's second folio substitutes *woolless*, which Dyce adopts. As the toga was always made of wool, I doubt whether the Poet would have called it *woolless*. See foot-note 9.

P. 243. *Battles thrice six*
I've seen, and heard of; *for your voices have*
Done many things; &c.—The words "and *heard of*" seem, to say the least, rather odd and out of place. Perhaps it should be "and *shared* of"; which is a modest equivalent for "*been a part* of," and is good English for "*had a share* of": therewithal it accords with what Cominius says in the preceding scene; where, after describing the hero's first exploit, he continues, "And in the brunt of *seventeen* battles since," &c. Farmer proposed to read "battles thrice six I've seen, and *you have* heard of." See, however, foot-note 11.

P. 244. *May I*, then, *change these garments?*—So Hamner. The original lacks *then*.

P. 244. *To my poor unworthy* notion,
He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.—So Walker. The old text has *notice* instead of *notion*. Here, as in divers other places, *notion* is equivalent to *understanding* or *judgment*. See page 327, note 5.

P. 246. *Than dogs, that are as often beat for barking*
As they are *kept to do so.*—Instead of *they are*, the original has *therefore*, which makes an ugly tautology with *to do so*.

P. 247. *Took from you*
The apprehension of his present portance,
Which, gibing most *ungravely, he did fashion*
After th' inveterate hate he bears you.—The original reads "Which *most gibingly*, ungravely," &c.; a breach of metrical order quite unusual with the Poet. The reading in the text was proposed by Lettsom. White transfers *Which* to the end of the preceding line, and thus disorders the metre of that line.

P. 247. *Of the same House Publius and Quintus were,*
That our best water brought by conduits hither;
And Censorinus, who was *nobly named so,*

Twice being chosen *censor* by the people,
Was his great ancestor.— Instead of the third and fourth of these lines, the original has merely "And Nobly nam'd so, twice being Censor." So that, in effect, a whole line has to be supplied in order to make any sense of the passage. The words supplied are in accordance with the narration in Plutarch, from whence this passage is taken: "The house of the Martians at Rome was of the number of the patricians, out of which hath sprong many noble personages, whereof Ancus Martius was one, King Numaes daughter's sonne, who was king of Rome after Tullus Hostilius. Of the *same house* were Publius and Quintus, who brought to Rome their best water they had by conduits. Censorinus *came of that familie*, that was so surnamed because the people had chosen him censor twice." Publius and Quintus and Censorinus were not the ancestors of Coriolanus, but his descendants. Caius Marcius Rutilius did not obtain the name of Censorinus till the year of Rome 487; and the Marcian waters were not brought to the city by aqueducts till near 350 years after the death of Coriolanus. Shakespeare confounded the ancestors and posterity of Coriolanus together.

ACT III., SCENE I.

P. 250. *Hath he not pass'd the* nobles *and the* commons? — So Rowe. The original has "the *Noble* and the *Common*." The second folio changes *Common* to *Commons*, but leaves *Noble* unchanged. Evidently both should be changed or neither.

P. 253. *O* good, *but most unwise patricians! why,*
You grave, but reckless Senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here *to choose an officer,*
That with his peremptory shall, *being but*
The horn and noise o' the monster, &c. — In the first of these lines, the original has "O *God!* but most unwise Patricians:" &c. We have other clear instances of *God* misprinted for *good.* — In the third line, Dyce substitutes *heart* for *here;* very infelicitously, as I cannot but think. For the patricians have not given the people the *heart*, that is, the disposition or spirit, to choose Tribunes; the people had that before; but they have granted to them the *legal power* or *right;* have given their consent to such a law. Coriolanus regards the common people *everywhere* as a many-headed monster, like the Hydra; and what he is now complaining of is, that *here*, in Rome, this monster

is allowed to choose a special officer who can do such and such things. As for the passages quoted by Dyce in support of his change, I can but say that they seem to me quite irrelevant. See foot-note 12. — In the fifth line, again, the old text has *monsters* instead of *monster*. As the word evidently refers to *Hydra* a little before, there can be no doubt, I think, that it should be in the singular. Corrected by Capell, and in Collier's second folio.

P. 253. *If* they *have power*,
Let them have cushions by you ; *if none*, revoke
Your dangerous lenity. If you are learned,
Be not as common fools; if you are not,
Then vail your ignorance. *You are plebeians*, &c. — In the first of these lines, the original has *he* instead of *they*, and also the Roman type clauses in the second and fifth lines transposed. I adopt Hanmer's reading as the simplest and most satisfactory way of setting both the logic and the language in order. Collier's second folio substitutes *impotence* for *ignorance*, and thus gets a fitting antithesis to *power;* but does nothing towards redressing the other difficulties of the passage. My own experience in proof-reading has taught me how apt lines and parts of lines are to get shuffled out of place in such cases. — In the second line, again, the original reads "*awake* your dangerous lenity"; which, it seems to me, cannot possibly be made to yield any consistent sense. *Revoke* is from Collier's second folio, which also substitutes *bounty* for *lenity*. The latter I can by no means accept; for Coriolanus is here speaking, not against the Senate's bounty in letting the people have corn *gratis*, but against their indulgent temper, or *lenity*, in letting them have Tribunes as their own special magistrates.

P. 255. *Th' accusation*
Which they have often made against the Senate,
All cause unborn, could never be the motive
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then?
How shall this bisson multitude *digest*
The Senate's courtesy? — In the third of these lines, the original has *Native* instead of *motive*, which was proposed by Heath. In the fifth line, also, the old text has *Bosome-multiplied* instead of *bisson multitude*, which is from Collier's second folio. It is indeed possible that *bosom multiplied* may have been intended as an equivalent for *multitudinous bosom*, which is a right Shakespearian expression. Still *multiplied* is but a flat and feeble substitute for *multitudinous*.

P. 255. Where one *part does disdain with cause, the other*
Insult without all reason.—The original has *Whereon* instead of *Where one.* Rowe's correction.

P. 256. *To* jump *a body with a dangerous physic*
That's sure of death without it.—Much question has been made of *jump* in this passage. Pope substituted *vamp,* which has been adopted by some editors. Singer reads *imp,* which is a term in falconry, signifying to graft or insert feathers into the damaged wing of a hawk; and so running into a secondary meaning of to repair or restore by artificial means. To my surprise, Dyce adopts *imp,* and speaks of *jump* as a "rank corruption." Staunton is confident we ought to read *purge;* and, surely, this is much better than either *vamp* or *imp.* But I am quite satisfied with *jump,* which was often used in the sense of to *risk* or *hazard.* The word occurs as a verb with that sense in the well-known speech of Macbeth, "We'd *jump* the life to come." Likewise as a substantive in *Antony and Cleopatra,* iii. 8: "Our fortune lies upon this *jump.*" The same use of the word is found in Holland's Pliny: "If we looke for good successe in our cure by ministring ellebore, &c., for certainly it putteth the patient to a *jumpe* or greate hazard." Singer says of *jump* that "nothing can be made of it." But, as explained by the above quotations, to *jump* a body is the very thing that would needs be done by using *dangerous physic;* nor is any thing more natural or more common than to use such physic in cases where the patient is "sure of death without it." In other words, the sense of *risk* agrees much better with the context here, than that of *mend.*

P. 257. Sen. }
Pat. } *Weapons, weapons, weapons!*—
&c. }
Tribunes!—Patricians!—Citizens!—What, ho!—
Sicinius!—Brutus!—Coriolanus!—Citizens!—
Peace, peace, peace!—Stay, hold, peace!—To this speech the original prefixes merely "*2 Sen.*" But it was clearly meant as a confused utterance of the assembled crowd, Senators, patricians, Tribunes, and others sharing in it. The last line of the speech has "*All*" prefixed to it in the old text; but it is evidently a part of the confused utterance which runs through the preceding lines: I therefore concur with the Cambridge Editors and Dyce in throwing out the prefix.

P. 257. *You, tribunes,*
Speak *to the people;* — *Coriolanus, patience;* —
Speak, good Sicinius. — The first *Speak,* which is plainly necessary to the sense, is wanting in the original. The insertion is Tyrwhitt's.

P. 258. Cor. *That is the way to lay the city flat;* &c. — So Pope. The original prefixes "*Com.*" to this speech: but the following speech is conclusive that this rightly belongs to Coriolanus.

P. 259. *Be that you seem, truly your country's* friends, &c. — As this speech is certainly addressed to both the Tribunes, there can be no doubt that we ought to read *friends,* and not *friend,* as it is in the original. Corrected by Rowe.

P. 259. *Help,* help *Marcius, help,*
You that be noble. — So Hanmer, Capell, and Walker. The original omits the second *help.*

P. 259. *Go, get you to* your *house; be gone, away!* — Instead of *your,* the original has *our,* which is palpably wrong. Rowe's correction.

P. 259. Cor. *Stand fast;*
We have as many friends as enemies. — Here, again, the original prefixes "*Com.*" Warburton clearly is right in saying that "this speech certainly should be given to Coriolanus; for all his friends persuade him to retire."

P. 259. Com. *Come, sir, along with us.*
Cor. *I would they were barbarians, as they are,*
Though in Rome litter'd; not Romans, as they are not,
Though calved i' the porch o' the Capitol, —
Men. *Be gone;*
Put not your worthy rage into your tongue, &c. — So Tyrwhitt and Collier's second folio. The original runs the two latter speeches into one, and assigns the whole to Menenius. To the first speech, also, the original prefixes "*Corio.*" Corrected in the second folio.

P. 262. *To eject him hence*
Were but our *danger; and to keep him here*
Our certain death. — The original reads "Were but *one* danger." An obvious error, corrected by Theobald.

P. 262. *The service of the foot,*
Being once gangrened, is not then respected
For what it was before. — Some would assign this speech to Sicinius; Lettsom would make it a part of Brutus' preceding speech, and then assign the next speech to Sicinius; but I can hardly think the Poet would have put into the mouth of either Tribune an argument so palpably unjust. See foot-note 31.

P. 263. *I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him*
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form, —
In peace, — to's utmost peril. — The original adds the words *in peace* to the first of these lines, — "bring him *in peace*"; a repetition at odds alike with sense and metre.

Act III., Scene 2.

P. 264. *Would you have me*
False to my nature? Rather say, I play
Truly *the man I am.* — So Hanmer. The original lacks *Truly*, which makes a fitting antithesis to *False* in the preceding line. Dr. Badham would read

> False to my nature? Rather say *you're glad*
> I play the man I am.

P. 265. *Lesser had been*
The thwartings *of your* disposition, *if*
You had not show'd them how you were disposed, &c. — The original reads "The *things* of your *dispositions*." Theobald substituted *thwartings* for *things*. Rowe printed "The things *that thwart*," &c. *Disposition* is Hanmer's reading.

P. 265. *I have a heart as* tickle-apt *as yours,*
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger
To better vantage. — The original reads "a heart as *little* apt," out of which it seems hardly possible to gather any fitting sense. For the present reading I am indebted to Mr. P. A. Daniel, of London. It seems to me to remove fairly the difficulty of the passage. See foot-note 5, especially the quotation from Chapman. Collier's second folio endeavours in vain to mend the matter by interpolating a whole line thus:

> **I have a heart as little apt as yours,**
> ***To brook control without the use of anger,***
> **But yet a brain that leads my use of anger, &c.**

P. 266. *Before he should thus stoop to th'* herd, &c. — So Theobald. The original has *heart* instead of *herd.*

P. 267. *Not by your own instruction,*
Nor by the matter which your own *heart prompts you,*
But with such words that are but roted *in*
Your tongue, thought's *bastards, and* but *syllables*
Of no allowance *to your bosom's truth.* — So Dr. Badham, in *Cambridge Essays,* 1856. The original lacks *own* in the second line, and in the third reads "*though but* Bastards, and Syllables." This is manifestly neither metre nor logic; and I think the correction sets the line in excellent order in both these respects. Of course "thought's bastards" means the *spurious,* not the *legitimate offspring* of the mind. — In the second line, the original has "that are but *roated* in." It may be something doubtful what *roated* was meant for; and some editors change it to *rooted;* but I think *roted* gives a more congruent sense, and is equally good English. Of course it means *spoken by rote.* — In the last line, again, Johnson proposed, and Capell printed, *alliance* instead of *allowance.* I was once led to favour *alliance,* but am now thoroughly satisfied that *allowance* is right. See foot-note 7.

P. 268. *Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand;*
And — thus far having stretch'd it, waving thy head,
Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
Bow, *humble as the ripest mulberry*
That will not hold the handling, — say to them, &c. — In the fourth of these lines, the original has *Now* instead of *Bow,* thus leaving *Which* without any syntactical connection. The correction is Mason's. — In the last line, again, the original has "*or* say," against both sense and metre. Corrected by Hanmer, who is followed by White and Dyce.

P. 268. *This but done,*
Even as she speaks it, *why, their hearts were yours.* — So Capell and Ritson. The original lacks *it.*

P. 269. *Must I go show them my unbarbèd sconce?*
Must I with my base tongue give to my heart
A lie that it must bear? — The original reads "to my *noble*

heart"; where *noble* is redundant in metre, and worse than redundant in sense: it fairly contradicts the hero's proper tone. An interpolation, I have no doubt.

P. 270. *Into a pipe*
Small as an eunuch's, *or the virgin voice*
That babies lulls *asleep.*—The original has *Eunuch* and *lull.* Hardly worth noting, perhaps.

P. 270. *Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me,*
But owest *thy pride thyself.*—So Collier's second folio. The original has *owe.*

ACT III., SCENE 3.

P. 272. *I have; 'tis ready* here.—The word *here* is not in the original, but seems fairly warranted on grounds both of metre and of sense. Supplied by Pope.

P. 272. *He hath been used*
Ever to conquer, and to have his word
Of contradiction.—So Rowe. Instead of *word,* the original has *worth,* which seems to me absolutely meaningless here. On the other hand, *word* seems rather tame for the occasion. Collier's second folio has *mouth,* which is dreadful. Lettsom suggests *will,* which is far from happy, *me judice.* Becket conjectures *wroth;* and thereupon Mr. P. A. Daniel proposes a reading which, though something bold, seems to me well worth considering, "and to *heat* his *wrath On* contradiction."

P. 273. Throng *our large temples with the shows of peace.*—The original has *Through* instead of *Throng.* Corrected by Theobald.

P. 273. *Do not take*
His rougher accents *for malicious sounds.*—The original has *Actions* for *accents.* Corrected by Theobald.

P. 275. *Nor check my* courage *for what they can give.*—For *courage* Collier's second folio substitutes *carriage,* which seems to me not unlikely to be the true reading. See, however, vol ix. page 39, note 5.

P. 275. *For that he has,*
As much as in him lies, from time to time,
Inveigh'd *against the people, seeking means*
To pluck away their power; &c. — The original has "*Envied* against." It appears that *inveigh'd* was sometimes spelt *invaied*, which might easily be mistaken for *envied*. Dr. Badham observes that "to *envy against* a person or thing is foreign to the language, and there was nothing to induce Shakespeare to adopt such a construction." He also quotes from Lyly's *Euphues* a passage where the author plays upon the resemblance of the two words: "Although I have been bolde to *invay* against many, yet I am not so brutish as to envy them all." The reading in the text was proposed by Becket.

P. 276. *I have been Consul, and can show* for *Rome*
Her enemies' marks upon me. — The original has *from* instead of *for*. Corrected by Theobald.

P. 276. *Making* but *reservation of yourselves.* — Capell and Collier's second folio substitute *not* for *but;* and Dyce follows them. The change appears to me something worse than unnecessary, since it would imply that the people *banished themselves*, after having banished their defenders. See foot-note 9.

P. 277. *Despising*, then,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back. — The original lacks *then*. Some such word is clearly needed both for logic and metre. Inserted by Pope.

P. 277. *Come, come, let's see him out at gates; come,* come; —
The gods preserve our noble tribunes! — come. — The last *come* in the first of these lines is wanting in the original.

ACT IV., SCENE I.

P. 278. *You were used*
To say extremity *was the trier of spirits.* — So the second folio. The first has "*Extreamities* was," &c.

P. 278. *Fortune's blows*
When most struck home, being gentle-minded *craves*
A noble cunning. — So Collier's second folio. The original has

"being *gentle wounded*," upon which editors have exercised their wits somewhat variously in correction. Pope reads "being gently *warded*," Hanmer, "being *greatly warded*." See foot-note 1.

P. 279. *My* fair *son*,
Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius, &c. — The original has "My *first* son," with which all are dissatisfied, I believe, as indeed they may well be. Heath proposed "My *fierce* son," and Hanmer printed "*First, my* son," neither of which is any improvement. Shakespeare uses *fair* in a great variety of senses, among which those of *brave, noble, high-minded* are repeatedly included.

Act IV., Scene 2.

P. 280. *O, ye're well met: the hoarded* plagues *o' the gods*
Requite your loves! — The original has *plague* instead of *plagues*. The correction was proposed by Lettsom, and is right, surely. See foot-note 1.

P. 281. *More noble blows than ever thou* wise *words;*
And for Rome's good. — Lettsom would read "thou *vile* words"; and he observes that "at any rate *wise* is preposterous." The word does not indeed seem just right; but I cannot see that *vile* does much better. I suspect we ought to read "*mere* words."

P. 281. Vol. *What then!*
He'd make an end of thy posterity,
Bastards and all. Good man, the wounds that he
Does bear for Rome! — So Hanmer. The original gives the first part of the speech, all before *Good*, to Virgilia. It seems quite out of keeping with her character; while the whole is in perfect keeping with that of Volumnia.

Act IV., Scene 3.

P. 283. *You had more beard when I last saw you; but your favour is well* appear'd *by your tongue.* — This use of *appear'd* seems rather strange to us. Steevens conjectured *approved*, which is substituted in Collier's second folio; and so Dyce prints. Various other substitutes have been adopted or proposed; the most noteworthy of which is *appayed*, given by Singer on the ground of its being an old word for

"*satisfied, contented*" !! It is evident that the authors of these changes did not understand the Poet's use of to *appear*. Mr. Joseph Crosby has satisfied me in the matter by pointing out a good many instances where that word is clearly used as a transitive verb, meaning to *show*, to *manifest*, to *make apparent*, to *present*, &c. So in *Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 3: "*Appear* it to your mind that, through the sight I bear in things to come." See, also, page 242, note 10, and *Cymbeline*, page 96, note 8.

Act iv., Scene 4.

P. 285. *Whose* house, *whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,*
Are still together, &c. — So Collier's second folio, and rightly, beyond all question. The original has *Houres* instead of *house*.

P. 285. *My birth-place* hate *I, and my love's upon*
This enemy's *town*. — The original reads "My Birth-place *have* I." Corrected by Capell. The original also has "This *Enemie* Towne." As the word was probably written *Enemies*, the misprint was easy. The correction was made in the fourth folio, and is fully justified by the words just after, "if *he* slay me."

Act iv., Scene 5.

P. 286. *Has the porter* no *eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such companions?* — The original has *his* instead of *no*; doubtless an accidental repetition from the words immediately following.

P. 287. *If, Tullus,*
Not yet thou knowest me, and, seeing me, dost not
Think me the man I am, necessity
Commands me name myself. — The original reads "thinke me *for* the man," &c. Capell struck out *for*; and Lettsom is surely right in saying that the expression *think for* is not English.

P. 289. *If Jupiter*
Should from out yonder *cloud speak divine things,*
And say 'Tis true, *I'd not believe* him *more*
Than thee, all-noble Marcius. — The original has the second of these lines thus: "Should from *yond* clowd speake divine things." It

is hardly credible that the Poet should here have written such a mutilated verse. Pope printed "Should from yon cloud speak *to me things divine.*" The reading in the text was proposed by Dyce. — In the third line, also, the old text has *them* instead of *him*, which is Walker's correction.

P. 289. *And* scarr'd *the Moon with splinters.* — The original prints *scarr'd*, which Collier's second folio alters to *scar'd.* As the two words *scarr'd* and *scared* were often spelt alike, it is something doubtful which of them the Poet intended here. See foot-note 8.

P. 290. *Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that*
Thou art thence banish'd, &c. — So the third folio. The earlier editions read "Had we no *other* quarrell else."

P. 291. *To fright them, ere destroy. But come* thou *in:*
Let me commend thee first, &c. — The original reads "But come in." As there ought, evidently, to be no halting in the metre here, the usual reading has been "But come, *come* in." Lettsom proposed "But *now* come in." It seems to me that *thou* is the simplest way of completing the verse.

P. 292. *But a greater soldier than he you wot* on. — The original has "you wot *one*." Dyce's correction.

P. 292. *An he had been cannibally given, he might have* broil'd *and eaten him too.* — The original has *boyld* instead of *broil'd.* Corrected by Pope.

P. 292. *This peace is nothing but to rust iron*, &c. — Capell reads "This peace is *good for* nothing," &c. Rightly, I suspect. Some have printed "is *worth* nothing."

P. 293. *It's sprightly*, waking, *audible, and full of vent.* — The original has *walking*, instead of *waking.* Pope's correction.

P. 293. *Peace is a very apoplexy*, a *lethargy;* mute, *deaf*, sleepy, *insensible;* &c. — So Walker. The old text lacks *a* before *lethargy*, and has *mull'd* instead of *mute.* The common explanation of *mull'd* is "softened and dispirited, as wine is when burnt and sweetened." But what has that sense to do along with *deaf?* The third folio has *sleepy*, the older text being *sleepe.*

ACT IV., SCENE 6.

P. 294. *We hear not of him, neither need we fear him;*
His remedies are tame: the present peace
And quietness of the people, which before
Were in wild hurry, here do make his friends
Blush that the world goes well; &c. — Here I am induced, by clear reasons both of logic and of metre, to adopt the reading of Hanmer. In the original the passage is printed thus:

We heare not of him, neither need we fear him,
His remedies are tame, the present peace,
And quietnesse of the people, which before
Were in wilde hurry. Heere do we make his Friends
Blush, that the world goes well.

Some change is evidently required in order to make any sense at all of the passage: and Theobald's change, which some adopt, "His remedies are tame *i' the* present peace," &c., saves neither the metre nor the logic. In the fourth line, *we* is palpably redundant in verse and paralogical in sense; the speaker's drift being, not that *we*, the Tribunes, but that the continued peace and quietness of the people, make the patricians ashamed of having predicted popular commotions as the consequence of the hero's banishment.

P. 295. *Bru.* Hail, sir!
Men. *Hail to you both!*
Sic. *Your Coriolanus*, sir, *is not much miss'd*
But with his friends. — The words, *Hail, sir!* together with the prefix "*Bru.*", are wanting in the original, doubtless by accidental omission, as both the metre and the reply of Menenius require them. Supplied by Capell. — In the speech of Sicinius, also, *sir*, wanting in the old text, was inserted by Capell.

P. 295. *Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our knees,*
Are bound to pray for both you. — The original reads "to pray for *you both.*"

P. 296. *And affecting one sole throne,*
Without assistance.
Men. Nay, *I think not so.* — The original lacks

Nay, thus leaving a gap in the verse, which Walker thought it so important to have filled, that he proposed to read *assistancy*. Pope inserted *Nay*.

P. 296. *We should by this, to all our lamentation,*
If he had gone forth Consul, so have *found it.*—The original reads "found it *so*"; thus giving us the construction, "*should found* it so," which is not English, and, I think, never was.

P. 297. *The nobles in great earnestness are going*
All to the Senate-house: some news is come
That turns their countenances.—The original has *comming* instead of *come*; doubtless an accidental repetition from the ending of the line before. Rowe's correction.

P. 297. *He and Aufidius can no more atone*
Than violentest contrarieties.—So Hanmer. The original has *Contrariety*.

P. 299. *Are mock'd for valiant ignorance.*—I suspect we ought to read, with Hanmer, "Are *only* mock'd."

ACT IV., SCENE 7.

P. 303. *So our* virtues
Lie in th' interpretation of the time.—So the second folio. The original has "*Vertue* Lie." Collier's second folio substitutes *Live* for *Lie*. Mr. A. E. Brae is for reading "So *doth* virtue Lie"; and I am apt to think that the right text.

P. 304. *And power, unto itself most cómmendable,*
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair,
T' extol what it hath done.—This passage has been a prodigious puzzle to the editors, most of whom have thought it badly corrupted. Various changes have been made or proposed, some in *evident*, but more in *chair*; such as *cheer*, in Collier's second folio; *hair*, by Singer; *claim*, by Leo; *care*, by Mitford; and *tear*, by myself. White has conjectured the true reading to be "Hath not a *tongue* so *eloquent* as a chair." I am now thoroughly satisfied that the old text is right; or that, if any change is wanted, it should be "Hath *ne'er* a tomb." And

I am indebted for this, in the first instance, to Mr. Joseph Crosby; though I since find that Staunton and Mr. R. Whitelaw have given substantially the same solution of the difficulty. The changes made and proposed have all proceeded upon the supposal that the construction is, "Hath not a tomb to extol"; whereas the construction is, "a chair to extol," that is, "a chair *that extols.*" With this key to the meaning, the old text is readily seen to be right. See foot-notes 7 and 8.

P. 304. *Rights by rights fouler, strengths by strengths, do fail.* — Here, again, the text has been generally held corrupt, and divers changes have been made or proposed; such as, "*Right's* by *right foulèd,*" "*Right's* by *right* failèd," "Rights by rights *foul are,*" "Rights by rights *founder,*" "Rights by rights *suffer,*" "Rights by rights *fail'd are,*" and "Rights by rights *falter.*" Dyce observes, "That a verb lies concealed under the corruption *fouler* is indubitable." But this is now far from being indubitable to me: I believe the old text to be right. See foot-note 10.

Act V., Scene 1.

P. 305. *A pair of tribunes that have wreck'd* fair *Rome*
To make coals cheap, — a noble memory! — The original reads "have *wrack'd for* Rome." Hanmer changed this to "have *sack'd fair* Rome." Others have turned *wrack'd* into *rack'd.* The reading in the text was proposed by Mr. W. W. Williams in *The Parthenon* for May 3, 1862; with the observation, "We meet elsewhere in Shakespeare with 'fair Athens,' 'fair Milan,' and 'fair Verona': and why not *fair Rome,* — that 'urbs pulcherrima'?"

P. 306. *I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon*
When it was least *expected: he replied,*
It was a rare *petition of a State*
To one whom they had punish'd. — In the second of these lines, the original has *lesse* instead of *least;* also, in the third, *bare* instead of *rare.* The latter correction was proposed by Mr. W. W. Williams in *The Parthenon,* May 3, 1862; who quotes from i. 1: "And *a petition* granted them, a *strange* one." The meaning of *rare* in this instance is *strange* or *extraordinary.* Singer thinks we should read "a *base* petition." The correction of lesse to *least* is Pope's.

P. 306. *He could not stay to pick them in a pile*
Of noisome musty chaff: he said 'twas folly,
For one poor grain or two, to leave't *unburnt,*
And still to nose th' offence. — The old text reads "to *leave* unburnt." The slight addition, *'t*, is proposed by Mr. P. A. Daniel, who fitly observes, "you may 'nose' an offence; but can only burn that which produces it." Of course "leave'*t* unburnt" refers to the pile of chaff.

P. 306. *Pray you* now, *go to him.* So Dyce. The original lacks *now.* The insertion, besides being wanted for the metre, is sustained from iii. 2: "I pr'ythee *now*, my son, go to them," &c.

P. 306. *Well, and say that Marcius*
Return me, as Cominus is return'd,
Unheard; what then? or not unheard, *but as*
A discontented friend, grief-shot with his
Unkindness?
Sic. Say't be so, *yet your good will*
Must have that thanks from Rome, &c. — The original has this passage badly mutilated and disordered: the words *or not unheard* are there wanting altogether; and the words *Say't be so* are made to close the preceding speech. Both Hanmer and Capell tried their hands at amendment, but without much success. Dr. Badham does better; whose reading I have adopted.

P. 307. *Speed how it will,* you *shall ere long have knowledge*
Of my success. — So Heath and Collier's second folio. The original has *I* instead of *you;* doubtless an accidental repetition from the preceding line. The old reading comes pretty near being absurd; as Menenius could not well remain ignorant of his own success.

P. 307. *What he would do,*
He sent in writing after me, what he would not;
Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions. — This passage is very troublesome: as commonly pointed, it is quite unintelligible, if not unmeaning. Very likely it is corrupt; but, if so, it is not easy to fix upon the precise point where. Staunton proposes to read "Bound with an oath to yield to *no* conditions." Leo says, "Professor Solly suggested to me, as a new reading, *hold* for *yield.*" I more than suspect this latter to be the true reading. See foot-note 9.

P. 308. *So that all hope is vain,*
Unless in's *noble mother and his wife;*
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him, &c. — The original reads "Unless *his* Noble Mother," &c. The reading in the text was suggested to Steevens. Of course *unless* is here equivalent to *except;* and such contractions as *in's* for *in his* are frequent in the Poet's later plays.

ACT V., SCENE 2.

P. 309. *I have been*
The book of his good acts, whence men have read
His fame unparallel'd, haply amplified;
For I have ever amplified *my friends,* &c. — Instead of the second *amplified,* the original has *verified,* which probably crept in from *verity* in the next line. Hanmer and Collier's second folio substitute *magnified.* Lettsom asks, "Why not repeat *amplified?*" Surely it is much better so.

P. 310. *Think to front his revenges with the* easy *groans of old women,* &c. — For *easy* Collier's second folio substitutes *queasy,* and Staunton proposes *wheezy.* But *easy* may well bear a sense not unfitting, — *slight, cheap, not worth minding.*

P. 310. *Guess, but* by *my entertainment with him, if thou stand'st not i' the state of hanging,* &c. — So Malone. The word *by,* necessary to the sense, is wanting in the original.

P. 311. *I have been blown out of* our *gates with sighs.* — So the fourth folio. The earlier editions have *your* instead of *our.*

ACT V., SCENE 3.

P. 314. *You gods! I* prate,
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted. — So Theobald. The original has *pray* instead of *prate.*

P. 314. *Then let the pebbles on the* angry *beach*
Fillip the stars; &c. — The original reads "the *hungry* beach," which has been variously explained as "the sterile, unprolific beach,"

and as "the beach hungry or eager for shipwrecks, *littus avarum*." So that, as an epithet of *beach*, taken by itself, *hungry* may well pass; but that sense has no coherence with the context here. Malone conjectured *angry*.

P. 315. *The* things *I have forsworn to grant may never*
Be held by you denials.—The original has *thing*. The word *denials* shows that it should be *things*.

P. 316. *Yet we'll ask;*
That, if we fail in our *request, the blame*
May hang upon your hardness.—The original reads "if we fail in *your* request"; *your* having doubtless been accidentally repeated from the line below. Rowe's correction.

P. 317. *Thou shalt no sooner*
March to assault thy country than to tread—
Trust to't thou shalt not—on thy mother's womb,
That brought thee to this world.
Vir. *Ay, and* on *mine,*
That brought you forth this boy, &c.—The original has merely "I, and mine." Capell inserted *on*. That the omission was accidental, who can doubt?

P. 317. *'A shall not tread on me:*
I'll run away till I am bigger, then I'll fight.—The old text reads "till I am bigger, *but* then Ile fight." Here *but* manifestly spoils the metre without helping the sense.

P. 317. *Thou hast affected the* fine *strains of honour.*—The original has *five* instead of *fine*. Corrected by Johnson.

P. 317. *And yet to* charge *thy sulphur with a bolt*, &c.—The original has *change* instead of *charge*. The same misprint has occurred before in this play. See note on "From whom I have received not only greetings," &c., page 337.

P. 318. *Down, ladies; let us shame him with our knees.*—So the second folio. The first reads "let us shame him with *him* our knees." Not worth noting, perhaps.

P. 319. *This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;*
His wife is in Corioli, and this *child*
Like him by chance. — The original has "and *his* child." The correction is Theobald's, who notes as follows: "Volumnia would hint that Coriolanus by his stern behaviour had lost all family regards, and did not remember that he had any child. 'I am not his mother,' says she; 'his wife is in Corioli; and *this* child, whom we bring with us, is not his child, but only bears his resemblance by chance.'"

P. 319. *Now, good Aufidius,*
Were you in my stead, say, *would you have heard*
A mother less? — So Pope. The original lacks *say*, thus leaving a gap in the verse where it is plain there ought to be none.

P. 319. *Out of that I'll work*
Myself a firmer *fortune.* — So Collier's second folio. The original has "a *former* Fortune."

P. 320. *We will* but *drink together; and you shall bear*
A better witness back than words, &c. — The original reads "*But* we will drink," &c. This naturally implies that the speaker purposes to join the ladies in a drink of wine. White observes, as he well may, "I cannot but believe that *drink*, addressed to Volumnia and Virgilia, is a corruption." See foot-note 12.

Act V., Scene 4.

P. 321. *Art certain this is true?*
2 Mess. Ay, sir, *most certain,* —
As certain as I know the Sun is fire: &c. — I here adopt, without any misgiving, the reading and arrangement proposed by Lettsom. The original gives the passage thus:

> Art *thou* certaine this is true? *Is't* most certaine.
> *Mess.* As certaine as I know the Sun is fire.

In the first line, Pope omitted *thou;* and modern editions set an (?) after "most certain." Referring to the phrases, "Art thou certain?" and "Is it certain?" Lettsom remarks as follows: "Shakespeare could scarcely have jumbled the phrases together so awkwardly as he appears from the editions to have done. *Is't* (as the old copies print it) is a

misprint for *I sir*, that is, *Ay, sir*, and here the Messenger begins his answer to Sicinius." This is said in one of his notes on Walker, *Shakespeare's Versification*, page 285. Afterwards, in a letter to Dyce, he adds the following: "It is not at all likely, or rather it is quite impossible, that a person would begin with '*Art* THOU certain this is true?' and then go on, '*is* IT most certain?' He would say, '*art thou* most certain?'"

ACT V., SCENE 6.

P. 323. "SCENE VI.—Corioli."—This scene, the place of which is not told in the old copies, used to be marked at "*Antium*," till Singer substituted "*Corioli*."

P. 324. *He bow'd his nature, never known before*
But to be rough, unswayable, and fierce.—So Hanmer and Collier's second folio. The original has *free* instead of *fierce*.

P. 324. *Holp to* reap *the fame*
Which he did end *all his.*—This has commonly been thought corrupt, and various changes have been made or proposed. Rowe substituted *make* for *end*. Some would substitute *ear* for *reap*, and *reap* for *end;* others would substitute *bind* for *end*. But the old text has been amply vindicated by the Rev. Mr. Arrowsmith. See foot-note 1.

P. 327. *That pages blush'd at him, and men of heart*
Look'd wondering each at other.—The original reads "each a *others*." Corrected by Rowe.

P. 327. *That, like an eagle in a dove cote, I*
Flutter'd *your Volscians in Corioli.* The original has *Flatter'd* instead of *Flutter'd*. Corrected in the third folio.